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GERMAN POLICY TOWARD CHINA AND THE CHINESE REVOLUTION, 1919-1931,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE BEGINNINGS OF
SINO-GERMAN MILITARY COOPERATION



by

G. ALLEN BURDEN


A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1972



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A B S T R A C T

This thesis examines the policy of Germany toward China during the period from the Versailles Treaty to the Mukden Incident. During much of this time, the formulation and implementation of German policy toward China was mainly carried out by the professional civil servants of the German Foreign Ministry. Rarely did China questions come under the scrutiny of Germany's elected representatives, nor did they animate German domestic politics to any substantial degree.

The First World War had resulted in a radical alteration of Germany's position in the Far East. The defeat of Germany had imposed limitations upon the scope of future German endeavors in the region. No active political role was permissible for Germany; therefore German policy makers resolved to limit future activities to the restoration and expansion of trade and commerce. This fundamental goal adopted by the Wilhelmstrasse naturally worked to strengthen its ties with that segment of the German commercial community interested in the Far East, and led to a close cooperation.

A further basic aim of German policy toward China was to avoid controversy and work to refurbish Germany's tarnished image with a view to aiding efforts to revise the Versailles settlement. However, this "low profile" policy toward China was difficult to pursue in view of the highly complex domestic situation in that country. The collapse of the Manchu Dynasty in 1911 and the wartime events had resulted in the fragmentation of the country, the appearance of warlordism, and the development of western-style ideological camps. Of particular importance in complicating Germany's policy toward China was the rise of

revolutionary Chinese nationalism embodied in the Kuomintang. During the period of the Kuomintang-Soviet alliance, Germany found that her relations with China became a matter of concern for German-Russian relations. This was true particularly for 1925-1926 at the time of Germany's proposed adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty on the "Open Door," and again in 1926-1927 during the Northern Expedition. The turbulent conditions in China also stimulated the traffic in armaments between Europe and that country. German nationals played a substantial role in the business much to the displeasure of the German government. Complications ensued for Germany with the Treaty Powers, and the traffic had detrimental effects for Germany's international image.

The success of the Nationalists in 1927 marked the inception of a major challenge to the Wilhelmstrasse's "low profile" policy. Following the break with the Soviet Union in that year and the swing to the right, the Kuomintang turned to Germany for military advisors and armaments. This resulted in Colonel Max Bauer's arrival in China in the late autumn of 1927. He established a German military advisory staff for Chiang Kai-shek and inaugurated the policy of purchasing armaments in Germany. He accomplished these innovations against the wishes of the German government. The advisory group expanded over the next few years, as did armaments traffic between Germany and the Nationalists. An interest in further expanding and consolidating the cooperation was awakened in the German military. This was ultimately accomplished, and the Wilhelmstrasse found itself impotent in the face of the *Reichswehr*'s challenge to the "low profile" policy. From this point forward, the Foreign Ministry's control of German policy toward China steadily declined, foreshadowing the involvement of many different German government agencies in the extensive Sino-German cooperation during the Third Reich.

To Juan Perez García, Marbella

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study rests mainly on the documents of the German Foreign Ministry now deposited with the *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* in Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany. The holdings of the *Bundesarchiv*, Koblenz, and the *Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv*, Freiburg i. Br., have also been consulted. I wish to thank the Canada Council for a Doctoral Research Fellowship during 1968-1969 which made the research stay in Germany possible. It is necessary to acknowledge with sincere gratitude the kind assistance of Dr. Sasse of the German Foreign Ministry in Bonn who permitted me with gracious courtesy to occupy for seven months a place in the limited space of the *Politisches Archiv*. I am also indebted to Dr. Friedrich P. Kahlenberg, Frau Dr. Schulze-Biedlingmaier, Dr. Traumpp, and Dr. Kinder of the *Bundesarchiv* for their efficient, courteous, and thorough efforts on my behalf. The personnel of the *Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv*, particularly Herr Bertram, *Oberstleutnant* Forwick, Dr. Maierhöfer, and Dr. Sandhofer, also were of great assistance. I remember with warmth the support of Dr. Fred Engelmann of the Political Science Department of the University of Alberta who did so much to make my stay in Germany rewarding.

The staffs of the Cameron Library, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, and the Murray Memorial Library, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, are also to be thanked for their aid in securing published materials.

I am indebted to the members of the History Department of the

University of Alberta for their kind support, particularly Dr. Brian Evans who stimulated my interest in Chinese History and read the manuscript of this study. His comments were valuable and prevented some gross errors. I would also like to express my appreciation to Dr. George Rothrock who read portions of the work, and suggested important revisions. Mrs. B. Steel of the secretarial staff has been of great assistance in technical matters.

Dr. John Tobias of the University of Saskatchewan has been extremely helpful in the final preparation of the paper.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to my thesis advisor, Dr. Ulrich Trumpener, who tirelessly and uncomplainingly wrestled with content problems, infelicities of style and translation, and syntactical errors. His contributions to the final product are immeasurable. I alone, of course, am fully responsible for any errors of fact or judgement which this work may contain.

Finally, to my son David whose birthplace - Bad Godesberg - was a consequence of this study and my daughter Tamara whose name has the same heritage, I owe many hours of lost playtime. To my wife Patricia, who offered encouragement and patience, I owe a debt far greater than mere words can express.

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ABBREVIATIONS

FREQUENTLY USED IN THE TEXT AND NOTES

AA	<i>Auswärtiges Amt</i>
Abt.	<i>Abteilung</i>
ADAP	<i>Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik</i>
Ang.	<i>Angabe</i>
BA	<i>Bundesarchiv, Koblenz</i>
Bll St.S.	<i>Büro des Staatssekretärs</i>
Chi	<i>China</i>
DAB	<i>Deutsch-Asiatische Bank</i>
DBFP	<i>Documents on British Foreign Policy</i>
e.o.	<i>ex officio; abbreviation before document number to indicate it was authored in AA without being inspired by incoming dispatch</i>
FRUS	<i>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
Geh., geh.	<i>geheim</i>
KMT	<i>Kuomintang</i>
Luft	<i>Luftverkehr</i>
MA	<i>Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg i. Br.</i>
OAV	<i>Ostasiatischer Verein</i>
PA	<i>Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes</i>
RFM	<i>Reichsfinanzministerium</i>
RM	<i>Büro des Reichsministers</i>
RYM	<i>Reichsverkehrsministerium</i>
RWM	<i>Reichswirtschaftsministerium</i>
RWM	<i>Reichswehrministerium</i>
St.S.	<i>Staatssekretär</i>
Vbd.	<i>Völkerbund</i>
VFO	<i>Verband für den Fernen Osten</i>
W	<i>Wirtschaft</i>

NOTE ON FOOTNOTE CITATIONS

This thesis rests mainly on the documents of the *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* in Bonn. My citations follow the file locating system used in 1968-1969 by the *Politisches Archiv*, i.e., the volumes which catalogue the microfilm collection of German Foreign Office and Foreign Ministry files: The American Historical Association, Committee for the Study of War Documents, *A Catalogue of Files and Microfilms of the German Foreign Ministry Archives, 1867-1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959); and George O. Kent, ed., *A Catalog of the Files and Microfilms of the German Foreign Ministry Archives, 1920-1945*, Vols. I-III (Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1962-1966). Specifically my citations (all abbreviated after first citation) are organized: Archive, Internal Department of the Foreign Ministry, File Designation, Title (Contents), Volume Number, Specific Telegram or Memorandum, Number, and Date. E.g., *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes* [Archiv], *Politische Abteilung IV* [Internal Department of the Foreign Ministry], *Po 4 OA* [File Designation]: *Die Konferenz in Washington* [File Title], III [Volume Number], Memo [by] Trautmann [Specific Memorandum] (IV Chi 14 [Number]), January 2, 1926 [Date].

Files from the *Bundesarchiv*, Koblenz are preceded after the first citation by the abbreviation "BA"; those from the *Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv*, Freiburg i. Br. by "MA."

In citing *Nachlässe*, the folder number assigned by the respective archive has been cited in Arabic numerals; if a folder contains pagination the page numbers immediately follow the folder number, e.g., BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 49, 9, *OAV* to Bauer (Potsdam), October 27, 1928.

All newspapers cited are from clippings in the files of the German Foreign Ministry or various *Nachlässe*. Chinese-language newspapers were translated by the Foreign Ministry's translation staff.

After the first citation only those works by authors or editors having two or more items quoted in this thesis are given short titles.

Because little useful purpose would be served in the context of this thesis and in order to limit the size of the footnotes, no specific distinction has been made between telegrams and despatches (both incoming and outgoing) of the German Foreign Ministry.

INTRODUCTION

The relations between Germany and China from the end of World War I to the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 have not received much scholarly attention. This is perhaps understandable. For one thing, this decade tends to be overshadowed by the tumultuous events which preceded and followed it. In Europe, the attempt of Germany during the 1920's to consolidate a democratic Republic and effect a peaceful revision of the Versailles settlement ended in failure, and historians have been diligent in researching the reasons for the demise of Weimar on the one hand and the simultaneous rise of the radical-right on the other. Likewise in the Far East, the post-World War I attempt to construct a new order foundered on the rise of militant Chinese nationalism and the subsequent revival of aggressive Japanese expansionism. Historians of this region also have tended to view the Twenties in light of subsequent events and ask "what went wrong." It is because of this preoccupation with the Thirties that only recently have published collections of government documents (except those of the United States) begun to appear, and mounds of archival materials be exploited.

Perhaps most important for the neglect of Sino-German relations during the 1920's is the fact that the foreign relations of the two countries were conducted within essentially separate frameworks. Nevertheless, there was a good deal of overlapping and even a similarity of aims in Chinese and German foreign policies. Both

countries found the post-World War systems of international relations anathema and worked for revision. Germany bent her efforts to redress the Versailles settlement while China struggled to end the "Unequal Treaty" system which imposed such humiliating restrictions on her sovereignty. In a word, both countries were revisionist. To those who believe with this author that nothing in the interaction of human affairs is inevitable, it is not beyond comprehension that revision of these international systems could have been accomplished peacefully. Yet a second World War was necessary before both international frameworks were effectively laid to rest.

The reasons for the failure of peaceful revisionism lay in both countries with the internal challenges posed by radical left and right forces gestated in World War I. The German democratic Republic founded at Weimar in 1919 was attacked by the extremist camps on both flanks, both camps often making common cause in their hostility to the western democracies. Likewise in China, peaceful revision foundered on the domestic chaos which followed the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty and the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912, and especially on the rise of militant Chinese nationalism with the challenge it posed to Western and Japanese imperialism. Here also the left and all factions of the right ultimately agreed in rejecting western democracy and particularly the pattern of international relations upheld in the Far East by the western Treaty Powers and Japan.

As a consequence of these conditions, relations between Germany and China during the period operated on two levels. Sino-German relations at the government level were correct and cautious. At the unofficial

level, radical elements in both countries found common purpose in opposition to the West. In Germany, the radical-right welcomed the challenge posed by China to the West, and the radical-left fully supported Chinese nationalism during the period of the Soviet-Kuomintang alliance. With the turn to the right of Chinese nationalism following the break with Russia in 1927, elements of the former secured support in Germany from radical-right circles and later from the German military. It is this interaction between official and unofficial policies in both countries which provides the key to the meaning of Sino-German relations during the period. The interaction also helps delineate the domestic histories of both countries, and perhaps the challenge to western hegemony posed after World War I.

The terminus of this study has been set at 1931. This date marks the point at which the forces which would shape the succeeding period emerged. With regard to Germany's policy toward China, the official agencies of the Republic had by then been outflanked by the radical-right and the German military. Henceforth German policy toward China increasingly was conceived outside normal government circles. In China, radical Chinese revisionism had evoked a negative response from Japan with the invasion of Manchuria. All hopes for peaceful revision of the international order in both areas of the world became after 1931 increasingly dim.

It is the thesis of this study that German foreign policy toward China during this period was developed and implemented by the professional civil servants and diplomats of the Wilhelmstrasse in line with the overall objective of the Weimar Republic - the revision of Versailles by negotiation. This necessitated that Germany maintain a

"low profile" in the Far East. The challenges posed to this policy by the German radical-right, the German military, and the Chinese Nationalists provide the warp and woof of the pattern of Sino-German relations from Versailles to the Mukden Incident.

This study concentrates on examining Germany's policy toward China and the domestic events of the 1920's in that country. However, because the bilateral relations of Germany and China were affected to a significant degree during the period by the Versailles system in the west and the continuing existence of the Treaty Power system in the Far East, on occasion it has been necessary to refer to Germany's relations with other powers (notably the United States, Great Britain, and Japan) when these relations affected those with China. Nevertheless, no attempt has been made to systematically integrate the history of Germany's bilateral relations with other powers into the narrative. This omission could legitimately be criticized (notably with regard to German-Japanese relations), but has resulted from a desire to keep an already complex story within limit with regard to space and clarity.

CHAPTER I

THE RESTORATION OF PEACE, 1919-1924

In 1926, the German Minister to China, Dr. Adolf Boyé, in discussing the domestic problems of that country, referred to the "dragon's teeth scattered about so frivolously" by the Allied and Associate Powers during the First World War.¹ He was alluding to the pressure brought to bear on China by the western camp in 1917 in order to induce her to enter the lists against Germany, as well as the subsequent measures to eliminate Germany as both a political and trade factor in China.² Although, in common with many of his countrymen,³ he exaggerated the efficacy of Allied compulsion in the complex web of events preceding China's declaration of

¹*Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes*, Bonn [hereafter cited as PA], *Schuldreferat: Die Kriegsschuldfrage, Stellung des Auslands - China*, Boyé to Auswärtiges Amt [hereafter cited as AA], No. 2089, July 10, 1926.

²Although there is a trace of *Schadenfreude* in Boyé's observation, the idea the internecine strife between Europeans in the First World War had triggered the "awakening of China" was common in the interwar period, and by no means confined to the defeated Germans. One commentator even went so far as to say that "when the white man attacked the white man in the Orient, it was the end of an era." See Pearl S. Buck, "The Future of the White Man in the Far East," *Foreign Affairs*, XIX, No. 1 (Oct., 1940), 23-33. This view of course is grossly simplistic and ignores the social and economic factors underlying the rise of Chinese nationalism. See esp. Mary Clabaugh Wright, ed., *China in Revolution: The First Phase, 1900-1913* (New Haven and London, 1968), *passim*.

³For a typical contemporary German interpretation, see the study of a German Foreign Ministry official, *Gesandtschaftsrat Freiherr von Schoen*, "Chinas Eintritt in den Weltkrieg," PA, *Schuldreferat: Kriegsschuldfrage - China*, Legation Peking to AA, No. 2089, Anlage 1, July 10, 1926. The Foreign Ministry consented in 1932 to publication of the study as a brochure in the campaign for Versailles Treaty revision. See *ibid.*, Memo (zu II Sch 850), n.d.

war,⁴ he did not exaggerate the profound changes wrought by World War I on the mentality of China and the prestige of the western powers in the Far East.

After the outbreak of war in Europe in August 1914, China initially had adopted a neutral position. Sentiment in both governmental and public circles, however, tended to favor Germany.⁵ Army officers in particular, an especially influential group in Chinese domestic politics during the period, sympathized with the German *Reich*. Like military men in some other non-European countries, this group admired the military virtues and efficiency associated with the Imperial German army, and many senior officers were personally familiar with the German military from close contacts extending back into the time of the Manchu Dynasty.⁶ Influential segments of China's business class also felt swayed to the German cause. As a result of the policy pursued by the German government since 1905 of cultivating friendly relations with China in order to expand trade and commerce,⁷ much of the damage caused by Germany's earlier

⁴Cf. Thomas E. La Fargue, "The Entrance of China into the World War," *Pacific Historical Review*, V (1936), 222-33; Robert T. Pollard, *China's Foreign Relations 1917-1931* (New York, 1933), 8ff.; Li Chien-nung, *The Political History of China, 1840-1928*, trans. and ed. by Ssu-Yu Teng and Jeremy Ingalls (Princeton, N.J., 1956), 363ff.; Hosea Ballou Morse and Harley Farnsworth MacNair, *Far Eastern International Relations*, II (New York, 1931), 832ff.; Werner Levi, *Modern China's Foreign Policy* (Minneapolis, 1953), 137-58; Russell H. Fifield, *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East: The Diplomacy of the Shantung Question* (Hamden, Conn., 1965, orig. 1952), 49ff.

⁵Feng Djen Djang [Chang Fêng-chên], *The Diplomatic Relations between China and Germany since 1898* (Shanghai, 1936), 175; Wesley R. Fishel, *The End of Extraterritoriality in China* (Berkeley, 1952), 28-29; Pollard, 8-9.

⁶For details, see Chapter V, *infra*.

⁷For details, see Djang, 170ff.

mailed fist policy (at the time of the occupation of Kiaochow and the Boxer Expedition) was repaired during the immediate *ante-bellum* period. German businessmen in China also had found it advantageous to deal with their Chinese counterparts on a cordial basis.⁸ In this fashion, through the policy of the German government and the activity of German nationals in China, Germany had acquired a favorable image in China which continued after the outbreak of war in Europe.

Nevertheless, sentiment does not often govern the making of policy, and twice within the first year of the war China had broached to the Allies the question of her participation in the war against the Central Powers.⁹ China's desire to enter the Allied camp did not stem from any moral or ideological considerations, much less from direct interests in the European conflict. Instead it was a recognition of the fact that involvement of the European powers in a major war at home focused their attention in that theater and weakened the restraints on Japan's expansionist ambitions in the Far East. With the European nations preoccupied with the internecine struggle, Japan's encroachment on China's sovereignty became increasingly a threat. The island nation's ambitions had immediately been manifested in the first months of the war when, technically in violation of China's sovereignty, she had used the outbreak of war as an excuse to seize the German-leased territory of Liaochow in Shantung Province. It was to forestall any such further moves on the part of Japan that China made her bids to join the Allied cause.

These early bids foundered on the opposition of Japan. With her

⁸Cf. Fishel, 29.

⁹Pollard, 8.

ambitions to retain Kiaochow, she had no desire to acquire China as an ally. In November 1915, a like fate was administered to a coordinated request by Russia, France, and Great Britain to Japan for assistance in securing China's participation in the war. At this time, Japanese objections to the scheme prevailed and the Allies acquiesced in China's neutrality for the time being.¹⁰ Japan, after all, was both militarily and economically a more valuable ally.

As the war deepened, the possibility of China remaining totally uncommitted also receded. Of decisive importance for China's policy toward the conflict was the attitude of the United States. When the progressive deterioration in relations between Germany and the United States led the latter to sever diplomatic relations on February 4, 1917,¹¹ the question of China entering the war¹² became of pressing importance to Peking. President Wilson had accompanied the break with Germany with an appeal to neutrals to follow suit in order to demonstrate opposition to German conduct of the war at sea. Paul M. Reinsch, the American Minister in Peking, was particularly energetic, even to the point of exceeding instructions,¹³ in urging the government of Premier Tuan Ch'i-jui to break relations with the Central Powers, a step that was taken on March 14, 1917.

¹⁰Morse and MacNair, II, 865.

¹¹See the colorful account of Barbara W. Tuchman, *The Zimmermann Telegram* (New York, 1958).

¹²China assumed that the American severance of diplomatic relations would shortly be followed by entry into the war. Pollard, 15-16.

¹³Paul S. Reinsch, *An American Diplomat in China* (London, 1922), 241-59; La Fargue, 224-28; Pollard, 10-11. See also PA, *Schuldreferat: Kriegsschuldfrage - China*, Legation Peking to AA, No. 2089, Anlage 1, July 10, 1926.

The breach was officially justified by China on the grounds that Germany had not complied with the demands of a strongly-worded note of protest against unrestricted submarine warfare transmitted a month earlier on February 9, 1917.¹⁴

Actually, mixed motives underlay China's willingness to accede to Wilson's appeal, but predominant was the hope that the United States and the Entente Powers would appreciate the gesture of solidarity with their cause and perhaps agree to certain desired concessions.¹⁵ Furthermore, Premier Tuan hoped to secure Allied war loans which would enable him to maintain his clique in power against rival warlords.¹⁶ These reasons still held a few months later when, after complex domestic maneuvering, a proclamation issued on August 14, 1917 by temporary-President Fêng Kuo-chang initiated a formal state of war between China and the Central Powers.¹⁷

Germany had long been aware of her vulnerable position in the

¹⁴John V. A. MacMurray, comp. and ed., *Treaties and Agreements with and Concerning China, 1894-1919, II, Republican Period, 1912-1919* (New York, 1921), 1369. At the time, sentiment in China was inflamed by the news of the sinking of the French ship *Athos* by a German submarine with the subsequent loss by drowning of some 500 Chinese laborers being transported to Europe. Morse and MacNair, II, 869-70.

¹⁵See the discussion in La Fargue, 224ff.

¹⁶Tuan's secret negotiations for loans and munitions with Japan were made public in May 1917. See T'ang Leang-li, *The Inner History of the Chinese Revolution* (New York, 1930), 132. It is interesting to note that when a German industrial commission visited the aged Anfu clique leader in June 1930 in retirement in the Japanese Concession at Tientsin, Tuan insisted that he had always been a friend of Germany's and had been obliged to enter the war for tactical reasons. See PA, *Politische Abteilung* [hereafter cited as *Abt.*] IV, Po 13 Chi: *Militärangelegenheiten*, IV, Consulate-General Tientsin to AA, No. 668 (IV Chi 1493), June 9, 1930. Tuan had had personal contact with Germany - he had studied artillery science in that country in 1889. See Chow Tse-tung, *The May Fourth Movement: Intellectual Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), 78, n. 6.

¹⁷MacMurray, 1363-64; See also Li Chien-nung, 363ff.; and O. Edmund Clubb, *Twentieth Century China* (New York, 1964), 63ff.

Far East. Already in August 1914, the German *chargé d'affaires* in Peking had entered into negotiations with the Chinese over a possible retrocession of German territorial rights in Shantung Province in return for China's neutrality.¹⁸ The discussions came to nought because of the opposition of Britain and Japan. As we have seen, German apprehensions that China might join the Entente in these first months of the war were not totally groundless. But for over three years, China's domestic turmoil and the predominant opposition from Japan sufficed to keep the Republic neutral. German diplomacy in China in these years was directed to maintaining that status.

By 1917, when it had become plain that the pressures of war had compelled the Allied Powers to intensify their efforts for Chinese participation, German diplomacy in China was hard-pressed to prevent the breach. The realities of the Allied blockade, the geographic remoteness of the two countries, and the Allied diplomatic preponderance in the counsels of Peking left Germany with little leverage compared to that exercised by the Entente Powers and the United States.

However, in an attempt to preserve Chinese neutrality, and making use of the well-known chronic need for funds of Chinese governments, the Imperial German Minister in Peking, Paul von Hintze, on his own initiative, offered one million dollars to Premier Tuan Ch'i-jui to work to this end.¹⁹

¹⁸Fifield, 14-15

¹⁹Hintze had been appointed to Peking in late 1914 in order to sound out the possibility of detaching Japan from the Allies, and presumably to insure continuation of China's neutrality. On the former problem, see Frank W. Iklé, "Japanese-German Peace Negotiations during World War I," *The American Historical Review*, LXXI, No. 1 (Oct., 1965), 62-76. Hintze's views of the usefulness of a German-Japanese alliance and his previous intrigues when Minister to Mexico are discussed in Tuchman, *passim*.

Tuan was currently engaged in a desperate struggle for power in the Peking regime and perhaps therefore presumed to be amenable to such an offer. However, Hintze's bribe was refused by Tuan who claimed that Germany had been "outbid" by the Entente,²⁰ presumably Japan with whom the Premier had close clandestine relations.²¹ After the return of his credentials in March 1917, Hintze left Peking for Shanghai in order to embark for Germany. Here he instructed the German Consul, Hubert Knipping,²² to delay his own departure and get in touch with Sun Yat-sen with a view to securing his aid in keeping China out of the war. The German Minister then departed China without incident at the end of March 1917.²³

At this point in Sun Yat-sen's checkered career, he was residing in Shanghai. After his Kuomintang Party (Nationalist Party) had been declared illegal in 1913 by President Yuan Shih-k'ai, Sun had fled to Japan where the following year he had reorganized his followers into the secret and conspiratorial (and more monolithic) Komingtang (Revolutionary Party). Returning to China in 1916, he had established his base of operations in Shanghai. Sun's true power, however, was very limited, and Germany was indeed grasping at straws in attempting to enlist the Chinese

²⁰PA, Abt. 1A, China 7: *Das Verhältniss Chinas zu Deutschland*, VIII, Memo Kaunitz, Anlage to A27424, August 18, 1917. See also Hintze to Staatssekretär Zimmermann, n.d., *ibid.*, VII. Zimmermann also had considered unilaterally renouncing extraterritoriality as a concession to keep China neutral. *Bundesarchiv*, Koblenz [hereafter cited as BA], R 85/979 II, *Frieden II: Wirtschaftliches*, Asien No. 1 (*Frieden II* 8352), May 26, 1919.

²¹See Li Chien-nung, 365; and *supra*, 16.

²²See *infra*, n. 64.

²³The same cannot be said for the Chinese Minister to Germany, W. W. Yen. He was denied permission to depart Germany unless a safe-conduct without time limit was granted by the Allies to Hintze, a problem solved only after negotiation between China and the Allies. Djang, 180-81.

revolutionary in her cause.

Sun Yat-sen personally had long been known as a Germanophile, and was among those opposing China's severance of relations with Germany or participation in the European conflict. His opposition stemmed not solely from his admiration for Germany, but also from his steadily increasing antipathy for England and what he foresaw would result for China from an Allied victory.²⁴ Sun also was apprehensive about the domestic repercussions in China which would ensue from participation in the war, accurately forecasting that the regime of *tuchlins* (warlords)²⁵ installed in Peking would only be strengthened in its hold on the reins of power if China joined the Allied camp.

Thus, the Chinese revolutionary's known opposition to both China's entry into the war against Germany and the Peking government could be turned to the advantage of Germany. Hintze had authorized Knipping to offer Sun Yat-sen up to two million dollars to aid in overthrowing Premier Tuan's regime.²⁶ Negotiations ensued but came to no firm results. Sun had not yet given up hope of securing Japanese friendship and influence although recently he had not been noticeably successful.²⁷ Knipping soon

²⁴Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), 206-207. Sun also felt that Japan should be allied with Germany in order to drive Great Britain and the United States from East Asia. *Ibid.* It is not without interest to record that Knipping reported that extensive negotiations had taken place in the summer of 1917 between Sun Yat-sen and Japanese Colonel Tanaka. For details, see PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, IX, Memo Knipping (A42651), December 20, 1917.

²⁵More accurately, "Provincial Military Governors." The title *tuchlin* had been introduced in July 1916 in recognition of the semi-independent position of the military leaders throughout China. Clubb, 62.

²⁶PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, IX, Memo Knipping (A42651), December 20, 1917.

²⁷Jansen, 202ff.

returned to Germany, but contact with the revolutionary leader was continued through a German consular employee, Schirmer.²⁸

Within a few months domestic events in China brought Sun Yat-sen once more to a position of influence. In the north, the struggle for power between Premier Tuan Ch'i-jui and President Li Yüan-hung led in May 1917 to the former's dismissal, the dissolution of parliament in June, and finally to the seizure of power in Peking by Li's momentary ally, Anhwei *tuchün* Chang Hsün. Chang ignored the President and restored the boy-emperor Aisin-Gioro ("Henry") P'u Yi to the Imperial throne, a development which lasted only a few weeks. This abortive restoration attempt once more crystalized opposition elements in the south and southwest against the Peking regime. Sun returned to Canton in July with the forebearance of the Yunnan *tuchün*, T'ang Chi-yao. The military leaders in the south also coalesced about the Canton government, and Sun, from his new-found position of influence, summoned members of the dismissed Peking parliament to reassemble in Canton. This resulted in the establishment of what was known as the Chinese National Military Government which professed to be the legal authority in China. Sun became *Generalissimo* of the new regime, and although one of its disputes with Peking centered on the latter government's declaration of war against Germany, it eventually followed suit by doing the same thing on September 26, 1917.²⁹

²⁸For more on German contacts with Sun, see *infra*, 52-73, *passim*.

²⁹Clubb, 66; Li Chien-nung, 375ff.; T'ang Leang-li, *Inner History*, 133-138. It should be noted that the Kuomintang itself was divided on the question of China entering the conflict. The Military Government, after the Assembly had passed a resolution recognizing the reality, if not the legality, of Peking's declaration of war, proclaimed its intention of prosecuting the war fully. Pollard, 37.

For the next decade, the relations of foreign powers with China were to be complicated by the existence of two governments in that country, both plagued by instability and a succession of warlord regimes.³⁰

The Chinese declarations of war immensely complicated the situation in China with regard to previous German rights and privileges. The leased-territory of Kiaochow, with the excellent harbor of Tsingtao, had been seized by the Japanese in November 1914, fulfilling the threat contained in an ultimatum of the previous August. This had demanded the transfer of the leased territory to Japan "for eventual restoration of same to China." The rejection by Germany of this claim had led to the Japanese declaration of war against Germany and the invasion of Kiaochow. China was understandably dubious about Japanese intentions with regard to the previous German-leased territory, an apprehension intensified by the Twenty-one Demands of 1915.

Return of German rights in Shantung province became a major war aim of China. The Chinese view was that a declaration of war against Germany had nullified the latter's treaty rights and thereby Japan's expropriation of those rights. China, presumably having regained the political and legal initiative as an equal Allied and Associate Power, therefore would be able to secure the abrogation of the German rights and privileges at any future peace conference. Of course, China was not aware that Japan had foreseen just such a difficulty and, prior to dropping her objection to China's entering the war, had smoothed her own way for retention of Germany's Shantung properties in a series of

³⁰For details, see Chapter II, *infra*.

agreements with all the major Allied Powers during the months between America's severance of relations and declaration of war against Germany.³¹

Other than the question of the eventual disposition of Kiaochow, China's entry into the war raised portentous problems for the future. Germany had participated fully as a member of the pre-war European order in China, enjoying extraterritoriality, municipal concessions, consular jurisdiction, and other rights and privileges generally lumped together under the rubric "Unequal Treaty System." German rights were generally abrogated by China during the course of 1917.³² The German municipal concession at Tientsin had been turned over to China on March 16, 1917. Other municipal concessions eventually were taken over by the English or French acting for the international community in China. The *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank* (DAB) was closed and its assets sequestered. German nationals were released from employ in the Chinese Maritime Customs Administration, the Salt Gabelle, and other Chinese governmental offices and corporations. German properties, including the Ching Hsing coal mine, were confiscated and liquidated.³³ A number of German vessels and all German military personnel in China were interned.

³¹Morse and MacNair, II, 866-67; Fifield, *passim*.

³²For details, see Djang, 184-85; Pollard, 37-43.

³³PA, Abt. IV, Po 25 Chi: *Das Deutschtum in China*, I, Anlage 1 of Peking to AA, K. No. 54 (VII Chi 573), "Aufzeichnung über die von Seiten der Chinesen sowie fremden Behörden verübten Eingriffe in deutsche Eigentums- und sonstige Rechte, sowie über den gegenwärtigen Stand der deutschen Interessen in dem früheren Konsulatsbezirk Tientsin," October 26, 1920. Po 25 Chi, contains many extensive and detailed reports on the effects of the war on German property and nationals in the former consular districts. The major German railway, the Kiaochow-Tsinan, had been appropriated earlier by Japan, but was sold to China in 1922. See Chi-ming Hou, *Foreign Investment and Economic Development in China, 1840-1937* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965), 64.

Most significant, however, was the abrogation of German extraterritorial privileges and the subordination of German nationals to China's jurisdiction. China was eager to seize this opportunity to demonstrate her ability to exercise enlightened judicial sovereignty.³⁴ By this act the first breach in the dike of foreign rights in China had been achieved and henceforth this would provide a stirring precedent and an inspiring example in the growing agitation for the restoration of full Chinese sovereignty. Germany never would regain such privileges in China, and it is ironic that the Allied Powers which viewed with much satisfaction the dislodging of Germany from China were thereby shortsightedly hastening the arrival of the day when a similar fate would confront them.

China, then, could look forward with some optimism to the peace settlement, and when the Paris Peace Conference finally convened on January 18, 1919, the joint Chinese delegation representing both the north and south governments took its seat with the victors. The delegates, reflecting popular feeling at home, optimistically expected the full implementation of Wilsonian ideals.³⁵ They naively expected not only the total satisfaction of all China's grievances but the creation of a firm foundation for future world peace.³⁶ Although the political fabric

³⁴Fishel, 30-35. The Netherlands exercised German rights of extraterritoriality after the break in relations until China was enabled to assume full jurisdiction by the declaration of war.

³⁵The Armistice of November 11, 1918 was greeted in China with jubilation and the proclamation of a three-day holiday. Chow Tse-tung, 85.

³⁶Levi, 153. For an interesting anecdote of the extravagant optimism fostered in China by Wilson's pronouncements, see Pollard, 50.

of China at the time continued to be rent by dissension and civil strife, the Chinese delegates from both Peking and Canton presented a united front at the conference.³⁷ Prime was the hope of securing China's fiscal independence and recognition of her rights to sovereignty, but the determination to secure the return of German rights and not allow their transfer to Japan for "eventual restoration" also transcended all domestic political antagonism.

Germany also thought it had cause for optimism. The collapse of the Wilhelmine empire and the creation of the Republic gave rise to the fallacious assumption that Germany would be able to participate in full and equal negotiations on the terms of the prospective peace settlement. Given the German view that China had been pressured into the war by the Allies, it was generally believed in Berlin that no enmity existed between the two countries,³⁸ and therefore that there would be little difficulty in resuming diplomatic relations and arriving at a satisfactory settlement of outstanding issues. Sentiment favorable to Germany had been widespread in China prior to the war, and this attitude was thought to have perservered.

Many men and institutions were concerned with the formulation of a new foreign policy for the German Republic during the confused period between the Armistice and the Versailles Peace, but the two most

³⁷ Fifield, 182-90. Peking was represented by Lu Cheng-hsiang (Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs), V. K. Wellington Koo (Minister to Washington), Sao-ke Alfred Sze (Minister to London), and Ch'en-tzu Wei (Minister to Brussels); Canton by Cheng-t'ing Thomas (C.T.) Wang and Wu Chao-chu (C. C. Wu). See also the admirable survey by Geoffrey Hudson, "The Far East at the End of the First World War," *Journal of Contemporary History*, IV, No. 2 (1969), 165-79.

³⁸ PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, IX, Memo Knipping (A42651), December 20, 1917; VIII, Memo Kaunitz (A27424), August 18, 1917.

important were government agencies which had transcended the change to a Republic virtually intact - the Foreign Ministry and the Supreme Army Command (*Oberste Heeresleitung* - O.H.L.).³⁹ The former, no less than the latter, continued to represent the values and social origins of the "old regime." True, there were attempts to "democratize" the Foreign Ministry by introducing "new blood" and reforming its structure during the first few years after 1918, but these hopes largely failed. The careerists of the Imperial Foreign Office dominated the Weimar Republic's foreign service.⁴⁰

This state of affairs was true *par excellence* of those members of the Wilhelmstrasse concerned with German relations with China. With the exception of one or two incidents during the Weimar period, official policy formulation and implementation remained totally in the hands of the professionals. No Foreign Minister or Chancellor during the Weimar Republic concerned himself to any great degree with German policy toward China, and again, with a few exceptions, all China policy was initiated in the careerist ranks of the Foreign Ministry. Four of the most notable figures concerned with China during the period - Carl Theodor Conrad von Schubert, Adolf Georg Otto ("Ago") Freiherr von Maltzan (both of whom rose to be State Secretary, a professional post equivalent to that of the Imperial Under-Secretary), Hubert Knipping, and Gerhard Köpke - had

³⁹Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, "German Foreign Policy between Compiègne and Versailles," *Journal of Contemporary History*, IV, No. 2 (1969), 181-97. For a discussion of the organization and functions of the *Auswärtiges Amt* after 1919 see Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Aussenpolitik 1933-1938* (Frankfurt am Main, 1968), 20-23.

⁴⁰Paul Seabury, *The Wilhelmstrasse: A Study of German Diplomats Under the Nazi Regime* (Berkeley, 1954), 3-24; Hajo Holborn, "Diplomats and Diplomacy in the Early Weimar Republic," in Gordon A. Craig and Felix Gilbert, *The Diplomats, 1919-1939*, I, *The Twenties* (New York, 1965, orig. 1953), 123-71.

entered the Imperial Foreign Service between 1896 and 1906.⁴¹ The German Ministers to China of the Weimar Republic showed a like pattern. All of these men - Adolf Boyé, Herbert von Borch, and Oskar Trautmann - stemmed from the pre-war diplomatic or consular service. With the key figures sharing the same careerist background as well as a similar social and political outlook, it is not surprising that German foreign policy toward China during the 1920's showed a remarkable degree of continuity.

It was during the spring of 1919 that the basic outline of German policy toward China was formulated. The task fell largely to the careerists of the Foreign Ministry, although the views of German trading and shipping interests were given great attention. Of the various conferences held during these months on the new role of Germany in the Far East, that of April 12, 1919 in the *Geschäftsstelle für die Friedensverhandlungen* stands out as of major significance in illustrating the views of German bureaucratic and business circles toward the post-war situation in the East Asia realm.⁴² Besides a dozen or so members of the Foreign Ministry, representatives of the *Reichsmarineamt*,⁴³ the

⁴¹Seabury, 16-17. See also Herbert von Dirksen, *Moscow-Tokyo-London: Twenty Years of German Foreign Policy* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1952), *passim*. A fifth figure of some importance - Erich Wallroth - was not a career diplomat. He had previously been a legal advisor to the Lübeck Chamber of Commerce, and, joining the Foreign Ministry after the war, in 1923 succeeded Maltzan as leader of the Eastern Division. See Martin Walsdorff, *Westorientierung und Ostpolitik: Stresemanns Russlandpolitik in der Locarno-Ära* (Bremen, 1971), 51-52; and, for character portraits of Schubert, Maltzan, and Köpke, see Walsdorff, *passim*.

⁴²BA, R85/979 II, *Wirt.*, Memo (Frieden II 8352), May 26, 1919.

⁴³Kiaochow had been under naval administration before the war. One of the naval representatives at this conference was Ernst Heinrich von Weizsäcker who later joined the diplomatic service and rose to be State Secretary during the Third Reich.

Kriegsministerium, the General Staff, the Finance Ministry, and the Economics Ministry participated. Interest and pressure groups from German industry and commerce also were well represented. Among others, the *Ostasiatischer Verein* (OAV)⁴⁴ (an association representing German firms trading in the Far East), the *Schantung-Eisenbahn*, the *Deutsch-Asiatischer Verein Hamburger Exporteure*, the *Deutsch-Russischer Verein*, and the *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank* (DAB) presented their views. A distinguished member of the Foreign Ministry, former-Ambassador Johann Heinrich Graf Bernstorff,⁴⁵ chaired the conference.

The conference opened with an exposition by a member of the Foreign Ministry on the necessity of differentiating between the reasons why China entered the war and the outbreak of hostilities in Europe. He argued that the European conflict had resulted from historical and national conflict of interests, "Russian panslavism, French revanchism, German-English rivalry," whereas China had entered the conflict under Allied compulsion and in pursuit of the restoration of her national sovereignty. Bearing in mind this distinction, one should recognize that no anti-German sentiment necessarily animated the Chinese people.

A major threat to this state of affairs, however, was the policy of the Entente (especially England) of spreading the lie that Germany pursued her goals at the expense of causing misery and dissension in other nations. Therefore German policy henceforth should be directed at refuting these charges and winning the confidence of the Chinese. To

⁴⁴ See also *infra*, 322ff.

⁴⁵ Bernstorff was recalled from Constantinople in October 1918 in order to make preparations for peace negotiations. Alma Luckau, *The German Delegation at the Paris Peace Conference* (New York, 1941), 29.

this end, Germany from now on should emphasize her attachment to the idea of a new world order, to the League of Nations and similar strivings for justice and equality;⁴⁶ never again should a distinction be made of the "yellow race," never again should one speak of the "yellow peril." Only by recognizing the end of international discrimination and imperialism, could Germany regain the friendship of the Asian peoples and once again enjoy a rich field of endeavor for German energy, enterprise, and diligence.

This analysis apparently was received favorably by the delegates because of its abstract quality. When it came to specific matters, there was some reluctance to fully recognize the impotent bargaining position confronting Germany vis-à-vis both China and the Treaty Powers in Asia. Even though all participants in the conference were desirous of rapid resumption of political and trade relations, some delegates put forward conditions which ultimately proved to be unrealistic.

It was generally recognized that because Germany was the defeated party in the recent conflict, the most beneficial state of affairs, i.e., the resumption of the earlier treaty relationship with China based upon the pre-war Treaty System, would not be realizable in its entirety. For example, the permanent territorial loss of Tsingtao and Kiaochow was tactitly assumed, yet in the prospective negotiations it was expected that Germany would regain her railway and mining rights in Shantung.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Which of course reflected the German "peace strategy" of accepting Wilsonian pronouncements on "Open Diplomacy" in order to participate in the peacemaking, and win the most liberal settlement possible given the circumstances.

⁴⁷ Presumably it was assumed that China would regain the rights from Japan at the Paris Peace Conference.

In turn, these rights could be used in bargaining with China for full financial restitution or compensation for the loss of state and private property, the *sine qua non* for future competitiveness in the China market. Already the view was taking shape that henceforth Germany should limit her future role in Asia to the pursuit of trade, the fundamental basis of German policy during the 1920's.

Some disagreement arose over the question of consular jurisdiction and extraterritoriality. Representatives of the Foreign Ministry argued that unconditional abrogation of extraterritoriality would stamp German nationals in China as inferior to other foreigners and could have detrimental consequences for future trade. Trading interests seconded this viewpoint.⁴⁸ Herr March, Chairman of the OAV, for example, agreed that "we cannot run around out there as second-class citizens," although he recognized that some reforms might have to be conceded. He argued that the question of abolition of extraterritoriality should be used as "bait" in subsequent negotiations to induce the Chinese to agree to other concessions, but extraterritoriality should be relinquished only if safeguards for German nationals were conceded and when and if other powers were prepared to terminate their legal privileges as well.

Herr Schrameier of the *Deutsch-Chinesische Verband* took a more realistic attitude. He observed that the termination of extraterritoriality was only a matter of time, and whatever policy Germany adopted at present, consular jurisdiction was bound to disappear. Already in 1917, his association had concurred in the proposal of State Secretary Zimmermann to unilaterally renounce consular jurisdiction as a visible sign of

⁴⁸It was only later, under the pressure of events, that business circles came to advocate renunciation of special rights in China. See Chapter X, *infra*.

Germany's confidence in the ability of China to govern herself and exercise judicial sovereignty. A concession of this nature might have served to prevent China's entrance into the war. Since Germany had seen fit to obligate herself toward Turkey to end the "capitulations," surely the same course must be feasible vis-à-vis China. Moreover, Schrameier stated prophetically, even if short-term disadvantages should ensue, such a unilateral action would in the long-run prove to be of great advantage to Germany's image in China.

Other matters discussed at this conference were the tariff provisions necessary for Germany to be able to compete with the Treaty Powers in China, continued support for German cultural endeavors in China and Chinese students in Germany, and German missionary activity in China. No firm decisions were reached, but the arguments expressed showed a realization of the importance for trade of cultural propaganda.

A few facts clearly emerge from the record of this discussion. First, there was the realization of the importance of the judicial issue for the Chinese, an awareness later driven home by Germany's resentment of the limitations imposed on her own sovereignty by the Versailles Treaty. Second, there was the understanding that Germany henceforth would not be able to play power politics in the Far East and could expect a good deal of resistance from the Allied Powers in returning to the Chinese market. And third was the naive belief that Germany would be able to negotiate her new status in China in the multilateral atmosphere of the peace conference.⁴⁹ No participant

⁴⁹ For the involved legal argument regarding the leased-territory of Kiaochow which was to have served as the basis of the German negotiating position on lost rights in Shantung at Paris, see *PA, Deutsche Friedensdelegation in Versailles, Pol. 8h, Ostasien: Kiautschou*, Memo (B. Br. VIII fr.), May 21, 1919.

imagined that ultimately Germany would have to negotiate directly with the Chinese, on their terms, and that more than two years would elapse before a treaty of peace between the two countries could be attained.

For in the event, the conference proved to be only of academic significance. On May 7, 1919, peace terms were presented to Germany by the victorious Allies with a deadline for the submission of written objections. Minor changes were accepted, and the final draft of the treaty was presented to Berlin for acceptance on June 16, 1919 under threat of an Allied ultimatum. Resistance was impossible and Germany accepted the Versailles Treaty on June 28, 1919. All hopes for a negotiated peace with the Allies and China at Paris were thereby dashed.

China's own ambitions were also thwarted by the Versailles Treaty. President Wilson had been unable to circumvent the Japanese legal position regarding previous German rights in Shantung,⁵⁰ and the final terms of the treaty transferred German rights and privileges in the Kiaochow leased-territory to Japan. As a result, the Chinese delegation could not bring itself to accept the instrument, and refused to sign,⁵¹ a decision later confirmed by the Peking government. A legal state of war continued to exist therefore between Germany and China. China ultimately terminated hostilities to her own satisfaction

⁵⁰Wunsz King [Chin Wên-ssu], *Woodrow Wilson, Wellington Koo and the China Question at the Paris Peace Conference* (Leyden, 1959), *passim*; Fifield, *passim*; Pollard, 53ff.

⁵¹Immanuel C. Y. Hsi, "Notes Concerning the Chinese Seals on the Peace Treaty with Germany, 1919," *The American Historical Review*, LVIII, No. 4 (1953), 866-68. On China's position toward the Versailles Conference, see also Chow Tse-tung, 84ff.

by executive order on September 15, 1919,⁵² an act that remained without force in international law and which, according to Charles D. Tenney, the American *chargé d'affaires* in Peking, was " . . . reminiscent of the earliest days of foreign intercourse with China, when China quite genuinely assumed to regulate the affairs of the Universe by Imperial edict."⁵³

From the perspective of German firms with trade interests in China, a legal end to the state of war and a resumption of treaty relations had to be negotiated with all possible haste. The war had led to a loss of property and markets, and the Germans resident in China had been expelled. German "hong" marks (trademarks) had been appropriated by Chinese or foreign merchants, and there was the real danger that the selling of inferior merchandise under the German trademarks would further undermine the commercial prestige and respect built up over decades by German businessmen. Most important was the removal of the discriminatory status from which German goods suffered because of the applicable tariff regulations.⁵⁴

⁵²MacMurray, 1381; PA, Abt. 1A, China No. 22: *Kiautschou und die deutschen Interessen in Shantung*, XXXII, Legation Bern to AA, No. 1052, September 25, 1919.

⁵³United States, Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* [henceforth cited as *FRUS*] 1919, I, (Washington, 1934), 375-94, *chargé d'affaires* in Peking to Secretary of State, November 22, 1919.

⁵⁴On December 27, 1917, a law on tariff autonomy had been promulgated by which treaty-less states became subject to significantly higher rates. See PA, Abt. IV, *Po 2 Chi: Politische Beziehungen Chinas zu Deutschland*, I, *Chengfu Kimpao* Regulation No. 28; Pollard, 40, n. 85. As a result of Allied pressure after the Armistice, the Peking government had repatriated the German community in China *en masse*, a further setback to German commercial interests. See Beverley D. Causey, "German Policy Towards China, 1918-1941" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1942), 11-13.

From the standpoint of the Foreign Ministry, there were other factors that had to be weighed before negotiations could commence. Initially, of course, the possibility still existed that China would eventually adhere to the Versailles Treaty which had not as yet come into effect. An adherence was not desired in the Wilhelmstrasse since it was expected that China's refusal to sign the instrument of peace would enhance Germany's bargaining position and thus facilitate resumption of relations on terms favorable to Germany. Second, it was recognized that Japan had emerged from the war as the dominant power in East Asia. Hence, Germany would have to ensure that prior approval be secured from Japan for any diplomatic initiative relating to China. Third, with the apparent weakness of China, both domestically and internationally, it was hoped that she would not feel capable of demanding renunciation of extraterritoriality as a condition of reestablishing relations. Therefore, until these questions - particularly that of China's signing the Versailles Treaty - were clarified, the Foreign Ministry resolved that a reserved attitude was preferable to "unseemly" haste.⁵⁵

In October 1919, the Wilhelmstrasse once again convened a conference in order to discuss the problem with interested parties from the commercial world and to formulate a bargaining position for any forthcoming negotiations.⁵⁶ It was decided that Japan would be the axis around which future German activities in China would rotate, and she was to be pre-informed of all diplomatic actions. Further,

⁵⁵PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, XII, Memo (A27153), October 15, 1919

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, Reinkonzept (A27670), October 21, 1919. A famous pre-World War I military advisor to China, Major Constantin von Hanneken, attended this meeting. See Chapter V, *supra*.

extraterritoriality should be regained if at all possible. In any event, previous suggestions to relinquish the privilege unilaterally as a friendly gesture were rejected. At most, extraterritoriality might be given up after a period of years and in return for appropriate legal safeguards.

The commercial interests pressed haste on the government in opening negotiations because of the threat to German traditional areas of commerce caused by lack of treaty relations.⁵⁷ Expropriation of German public and private property in China was continuing, as was liquidation of previously-seized assets. The deportation of some 2000 German nationals early in 1919 by the Chinese, albeit under pressure from Britain and France,⁵⁸ was a serious blow to German commerce. With regard to extraterritoriality, the China firms were not as yet prepared to renounce that privilege, but thought that they could live with its loss if all other nations should follow suit. Perhaps, it was argued, a period of four or five years could be agreed upon, at the end of which time all nations would terminate their judicial privileges simultaneously. What concerned the businessmen was competition from other powers; they were confident that there would be little to fear from becoming subject to China's jurisdiction insofar as legal matters were concerned since presumably the Chinese would strive to emphasize their capacity for a "civilized" (i.e., western) exercise of judicial sovereignty. The basic objection centered around the apprehension of

⁵⁷ Chinese regulations prohibiting "trade with the enemy" had remained in effect. See MacMurray, 1379-81.

⁵⁸ *FRUS* 1919, I, 328-41, U.S. Minister to China Reinsch to State Department, No. 2821, June 6, 1919.

possessing an inferior status in law to the other foreign businessmen in China, a legal status which could result in a lowering of German prestige in the eyes of the Chinese thereby affecting detrimentally commercial and social matters. It was imperative, therefore, that in any case negotiations be initiated at once.

The East Asia desk ⁵⁹ of the Foreign Ministry actually had already extended unofficial feelers to Chinese diplomatic missions in Switzerland, Denmark, and the Netherlands. A German official had been dispatched to Copenhagen on September 12, 1919 where he had broached the question of opening preliminary discussions with the Chinese Minister to Denmark, W. W. Yen.⁶⁰ Yen, the pre-1917 Chinese Minister at Berlin, although personally favorable to a rapid resumption of German-Chinese relations, had not as yet received any instructions on the question and considered the current domestic situation in China inauspicious for such a move. Simultaneously, confidential contact had been made in Berne with the Chinese Legation, with the result that two members of the Chinese Peace Delegation came to Berlin.⁶¹ Nevertheless, these feelers in Europe remained sterile. However, initiatives in Peking by German

⁵⁹ Between 1919 and 1921, East Asia was one of six regional departments under *Ministerialdirektoren (Abteilung VII)*. From 1922 on, the six regional divisions were reduced to three, East Asian affairs subsequently being included in the *Ostabteilung - Abt. IV* (Scandinavia, Poland, Memel, Russia, Baltic States, Finland, and the Far East). It is convenient to use the phrase "East Asia desk" both before and after the 1921 reorganization, but of course after the latter date Far Eastern questions were dealt with both by the East Asia desk of the *Ostabteilung*, and by senior members of the division. See Appendix B.

⁶⁰ Yen, with V.K. Wellington Koo, Alfred Sze, and Eugene Ch'en, was one of a group of career diplomats who played a major role in China's conduct of foreign relations until the Nationalist takeover in 1927. For assessments of Yen's political attitude and role in Chinese foreign policy, see T'ang Leang-li, *Inner History*, 128; Pollard, 408, and *passim*.

⁶¹ PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, XIV, Memo (A2372), February 2, 1920.

civil servants released from Chinese internment resulted early in 1920 in the Peking government agreeing to exchange representatives.⁶² Dr. Chang Yün-kai, Legation Secretary in Copenhagen, was transferred to Berlin, and upon his arrival more formal discussions began.

Further, in March 1920, a telegram from the Waichiao Pu (China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs) granted permission for the dispatch of a German unofficial negotiating team (the Chinese also were cautious about the Japanese reaction) to Peking. The mission was made up of old China-hands, foreign service personnel with many years of service in China, and was headed by *Generalkonsul* Herbert von Borch. He had begun his career as a student interpreter at the Peking Legation in 1901. Between 1904 and 1917, Borch had served in various consular posts in the south of China and, although some criticism was heard in Peking that he was not a conspicuous enough figure for the negotiations⁶³ (Dr. Wilhelm Solf was appointed Ambassador to Japan just prior to Borch's arrival in China), his expertise served the Foreign Ministry well. The group departed Germany at the end of April and, travelling via Port Said, Sabang, and Kobe, arrived in Peking some two months later.⁶⁴

⁶²PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Zwischenstaatliche aussenpol. Probleme: Shantung*, I, *Pei Ching Jih Pao*, March 29, 1920.

⁶³Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 40.

⁶⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, I, Memo (VII Chi 528), June 12, 1920; private letter March (OAV) to AA (VII Chi 250), April 27, 1920. Foreign Minister Dr. Walter Simons informed the *Reichstag* only on October 29, 1920 that negotiations were in progress in China. Simons could be considered a professional diplomat, having entered the foreign service in 1890 and developing a legal talent that saw him appointed as German commissioner-general with the German peace delegation at Versailles. Between June 1920 and May 1921, he served as a non-partisan Foreign Minister in the Fehrenbach cabinet. He reflected the views in the East Asia desk of the Foreign Ministry when, in general terms, he expressed the hope that a successful conclusion of the talks with the Chinese would once again permit German nationals to participate in China's

Beginning in March, a number of friendly and frank conversations took place in Berlin.⁶⁵ The Chinese were represented by Dr. Chang and Minister W. W. Yen. Their negotiating position which emerged during the preliminary discussions rested on two essential conditions. First, any future political and economic agreement between Germany and China had to be based on the principles of complete equality and reciprocity. Second, Chinese judicial sovereignty would have to be respected. This meant that consular jurisdiction and extraterritoriality must be abolished, and that the principle of an autonomous tariff must be accepted. However, the impression was left that the abolition of such "unequal rights" would result for the Germans in total freedom of residence and movement throughout the interior of China, a privilege that the Treaty Powers did not have.⁶⁶

Germany responded in the affirmative to these conditions, the sole *proviso* being that in any forthcoming treaty Germany must not suffer discriminatory treatment vis-à-vis other foreign powers in China, particularly in the tariff issue. The chief Chinese negotiator, W. W.

development as businessmen, teachers, and engineers. *Reichstag 1920/22, Stenographische Berichte*, Bd. 345 (Berlin: 1921), 870, quoted in Karl Mehner, "Weimar-Kanton: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der deutsch-chinesischen Beziehungen in den Jahren 1921-1924," *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität*, Leipzig, VIII (1958-1959), 26-27. The current head of the East Asia desk, *Ministerialdirektor* Hubert Knipping, who had many years of consular experience in Shanghai and Tientsin, during the early months of 1920 was attempting to assist the work of the negotiators by cementing good relations with one of the strong men behind the Peking regime, Hsu Shu-cheng. For details, see Chapter V, *infra*.

⁶⁵ PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, XV, Memo (A3508), March 3, 1920; Memo Knipping (A3780), March 9, 1920.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., PA, Abt. IV, R 8 Chi; *Rechte von Exterritorialen*, I, AA to Dr. Chang Yün-kai, Berlin (VII Chi 271), May 12, 1920.

Yen, thought that some practical solution could be found, such as classifying all German imports to China generally as "necessary." This would put German goods into the 5 per cent *ad valorem* category, a rate equal to the tariff on occasion accepted by the Treaty Powers.⁶⁷ China in this way would satisfy her basic prerequisite, i.e., an "autonomous" tariff policy, and Germany would regain a competitive position for her commercial interests. With regard to the extra-territoriality issue, Germany also wanted assurance that her nationals would not fall under the jurisdiction of the so-called "Mixed Courts,"⁶⁸ preferring that they be subject to purely Chinese jurisdiction.

The Chinese willingness to open negotiations at this juncture apparently stemmed from the stalemate reached with Japan over the Shantung question. The Versailles Treaty had come into effect on January 10, 1920 without the adherence of China, and for redress of her losses China had entered discussions with Japan. When it was seen that Japan would not willingly give up her gains, China turned to Germany.

⁶⁷PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, XV, Memo Knipping (A3780), March 9, 1920. Although the legal tariff rate was fixed lower than this amount, the Treaty Powers had agreed in various years since 1902 to the imposition of tariff increases in order to give China an effective 5 per cent *ad valorem* in the lowest category. See Dorothy Borg, *American Policy and the Chinese Revolution, 1925-1928* (New York: 1947), 49ff. In September 1919, the Chinese imposed tariff rates of a discriminatory nature on goods from non-treaty powers, regardless of the nationality of the importer. The rates were:

Luxuries	.....	30-100%	<i>ad valorem</i>	
"Useless goods"	.....	20-30%	"	"
"Useful goods"	.....	10-20%	"	"
"Necessary goods"		5-10%	"	"

Pollard, 72.

⁶⁸Although the system varied, mixed courts administered Chinese law and participation was permitted to representatives of the plaintiff's nationality. This often meant that influence could be brought to bear by the Treaty Powers. See the discussion in Fishel, 18-25.

It was hoped that the treaty rights formerly held by Germany could be regained in an equal and reciprocal treaty which would provide both a moral and legal weapon to be used in pursuing the problem in the League of Nations.⁶⁹ Moreover, a German-Chinese agreement which provided for the abolition of consular jurisdiction could be used in the mounting campaign to restore China's sovereignty.⁷⁰ The German government was well aware of the Chinese strategy,⁷¹ and also cognizant of the dangers this could pose for German relations with other nations, particularly Japan.

The Chinese position was further clarified when preliminary discussions opened in Peking. The Waichiao Pu requested a written declaration that Germany acknowledge articles 128-134 of the Versailles Treaty as binding toward China. These articles renounced in favor of China all benefits and privileges resulting from the Boxer Protocol, abrogated the leases of German concessions in China, ceded all German public property in these concessions and elsewhere, waived all claims against the Chinese government arising out of the internment of German nationals and the liquidation and sequestration of German properties, and restored the astronomical instruments carried away by German troops during

⁶⁹China became a member of the League of Nations by virtue of having signed the Treaty of Peace with Austria at St. Germain on September 10, 1919.

⁷⁰See, e.g., the article in *Kung Yen Pao*, April 15, 1920. PA, Abt. IV, R 8 Chi: Rechte, I, (VII Chi 803).

⁷¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, I, Memo Walter (VII Chi 588), June 18, 1920. The Japanese too were aware of the potential danger, since Japan had begun the recovery of her own sovereignty in a similar fashion. *Ibid.*, article of the *Japan Chronicle*, republished in the *Peking Leader*, April 28, 1921.

the Boxer Rebellion.⁷² If such an official declaration was issued, China would be prepared to enter negotiations for a trade agreement.⁷³

This demand for a pre-declaration by Germany proved embarrassing. Germany did not desire to adhere voluntarily to any provisions of the Versailles Treaty, having signed that instrument as it were under protest. A voluntary admission by Germany of the legality of any portion of the treaty would hamper her own efforts for revision. Furthermore, unilateral concessions to China might damage current German-Japanese negotiations relating to the disposition of German properties in Kiaochow.⁷⁴ The Foreign Ministry still assumed that any re-entry into Asian markets would be resisted by the Entente, and considered that maintaining cordial relations with Japan was a *sine qua non* for its East Asian policy.

During the course of 1920 it became quite evident that China was determined not to resume formal diplomatic relations without the fulfillment of her basic demands. As a sign of her new-found pride and determination, two treaties had been negotiated with other foreign states on the basis of equality and reciprocity which abolished extraterritoriality. The first nation to forego consular jurisdiction was Bolivia in a trade agreement signed December 13, 1919. Although the agreement contained a most-favored nation clause, an accompanying exchange of notes stipulated that this would not confer rights of

⁷²MacMurray, 1487-88.

⁷³PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag über die Wiederherstellung des Friedenszustandes, I, AA to Dr. Chang Yun-kai (zu VII Chi 1017), September 3, 1920.

⁷⁴For details of these negotiations, see PA, Abt. IV, Kol-Po. 2: Das Schutzgebiet Kiautschaou, I-III.

extraterritoriality.⁷⁵ In June 1920, a treaty with Persia also specifically subordinated citizens of that country to China's jurisdiction.

These successes were imperative for the men in power in Peking. As a result of the repercussions of the May Fourth Movement and the domestic struggle for power, public opinion had become of preponderant importance in the conduct of relations with foreign powers. No faction among the many contending for power in China dared face the charge of "kow-towing" to the foreigners. This fact was fully recognized by the German negotiators, and as the arduous negotiations progressed it became increasingly clear that Germany had a very weak position.⁷⁶ China was not prepared to bargain over rights which she considered non-negotiable.

Ultimately, the basic positions of both parties were formulated by January 1921. The Chinese emphasis was placed on the following:⁷⁷

1. Negotiations would be conducted on the basis of complete equality and reciprocity (which would nullify German rights to consular jurisdiction).
2. Recognition of the principle of unlimited territorial sovereignty (which implied acceptance of China's autonomy in tariff matters).
3. Recognition of Articles 128-134 of the Versailles Treaty as valid as well as any other provisions touching on the interests of China (e.g., Article 264, which would provide China with most-favored nation status in Germany).

⁷⁵Fishel, 42; Pollard, 97-98. See also "The Significance of the Chinese-Bolivian Treaty," *Ostasiatische Rundschau*, I, No. 10, June 15, 1920 in *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, I.

⁷⁶For details, see *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag*, particularly the private letter of Borch to Knipping, II (VII Chi 690), January 30, 1921; and V, Borch to AA, K. No. 263 (VII Chi 1657), May 25, 1921.

⁷⁷*Ibid.*, II, Memo (VII Chi 118), January 19, 1921.

4. A statement by Germany that through the exigencies of war and the Versailles Treaty she had been obliged to renounce all of her rights, titles, and privileges regarding the Province of Shantung and therefore been deprived of the opportunity of restoring said rights to China.

The German objectives were more prosaic. In return for acceding to the Chinese principles, Germany hoped to obtain concessions of material advantage which would not leave German trade and commerce in China in a worse competitive position relative to that enjoyed by the Treaty Powers. Of predominant importance was the cessation of liquidation of German property previously sequestered.⁷⁸ It was also considered important to receive compensation for the German properties already liquidated. These latter two points constituted the main incentives for Germany in achieving a rapid understanding.

Following a sounding of the views of the competent Federal Ministries, the appropriate agencies in the pertinent states,⁷⁹ and the commercial interests, the Foreign Ministry decided to accept the basic Chinese prerequisites. The propensity of the German authorities to agree was presumably enhanced by the news transmitted by the Dutch Consulate-General in Peking that all German trademarks registered with

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, II, Knipping to Legation Peking, No. 1 (zu VII Chi 1642), January 1, 1921. For information on the condition of German nationals and property in 1920 in the more important commercial centers of China, see PA, Abt. IV, Po 25 Chi: *Deutschtum*, I, Borch to AA, K. No. 11 (VII Chi 1165), August 14, 1920 (on Shanghai); K. No. 42 (VII Chi 1488), October 7, 1920 (on Tsinanfu [Chinan]); K. No. 54 (VII Chi 1573), October 26, 1920 (on Tientsin); K. No. 56 (VII Chi 1574), October 29, 1920 (on Hankou [Wuhan]); K. No. 61 (VII Chi 1634), November 8, 1920 (on Changsha); K. No. 72 (VII Chi 10), November 15, 1920 (on Province Szechwan); and K. No. 93 (VII Chi 99), November 27, 1920 (on Ichang).

⁷⁹For details, see PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: *Vertrag*, II, esp. Plenipotentiary of Bremen in Berlin to AA, January 31, 1921; Ministry of Justice in Bavaria to AA, January 31, 1921; Legation of Hamburg in Berlin to AA (VII Chi 203), February 1, 1921.

the Chinese Customs Administration had been revoked. Furthermore, no new German trademarks would be recorded until trade relations were formally resumed.⁸⁰ Moreover, the Waichiao Pu had emphasized that they no longer could restrain the various Chinese Ministries administering German property, and liquidation was imminent.⁸¹ The German decision to accept the Chinese conditions accelerated negotiations and cleared the way for the conclusion of the Sino-German Treaty signed on May 20, 1921.⁸²

This agreement was the first treaty concluded between China and a major power based upon the principles of equality and reciprocity. Germany had made major concessions of principle in order to accommodate China, but China for her part had agreed to German-devised formulas which diluted the repercussions these concessions might otherwise have had within the wider range of German foreign policy. For example, the thorny problem of German rights in Shantung lost at Versailles was sidestepped in an accompanying declaration in which the German government pointed out:

. . . that, owing to the events of the war and the Treaty of Versailles, Germany had been obliged to renounce all her rights, titles and privileges acquired by virtue of the Treaty concluded between Germany and China on March 6, 1898, and by virtue of all other Acts concerning the province of Shantung, and is thus deprived of the possibility of restoring them to China⁸³

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, III, Memo, n.d. [approximately June, 1921].

⁸¹*Ibid.*, II, Borch to AA, No. 48 (VII Chi 1642), December 28, 1920. See Chapter II, *infra*, on the restoration of relations with the Southern government.

⁸²*Reichsgesetzblatt* (Berlin, ca. 1866ff.), 1921, 829-37; League of Nations, *Treaty Series, Publication of Treaties and International Engagements Registered with the Secretariat of the League of Nations*, IX (1922), No. 261, "Germany and China: Agreements regarding the restoration of the State of Peace," May 10, 1921, 272-89.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 283.

With regard to Articles 128-134 of the Versailles Treaty, a similar formula was devised. A covering letter by the German plenipotentiary, Borch, stated that, although Germany promised to fulfill the obligations toward China arising out of these articles, his government was " . . . not prepared at the present time to declare again its general recognition of the Treaty of Versailles" which would be equivalent to "voluntary recognition" and "would prejudice the subsequent revision of said Treaty." However, Germany

. . . would not raise any objections should China . . . avail herself of certain other rights which she derives from the Treaty . . . either in their present form or,⁸⁴ should the Treaty be revised, in their modified form.

In the accompanying declaration, Germany unilaterally renounced consular jurisdiction, the most significant concession from the Chinese point of view. In return, German nationals would be subject only to courts newly established under China's judicial reform of 1909. This provision placed German nationals into a separate jurisdictional classification from citizens of all other powers, with or without treaties in China.⁸⁵

The clauses restoring trade relations stipulated that duties should not be set higher for German nationals than for nationals of China or other countries. This was not the equivalent of a most-favored nation provision, since imports from Germany were not mentioned. However, in the accompanying exchange of notes, the Chinese did promise that German goods would be subject to the general customs regulations until

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 284.

⁸⁵ See the article on extraterritoriality by G. Padoux, advisor to the Chinese government, in *Peking Daily News*, August 18, 1925 in PA, Abt. IV, R 8 Chi: Rechte, II, (IV Chi 1870), September 8, 1925.

China should regain her autonomy in the matter. A similar treatment could be expected by China since the most-favored nation clause of the Versailles Treaty (Article 264) was confirmed. The former provisions fulfilled the principle of autonomous tariff rights on the part of China without fixing a set amount which might prove detrimental in her prospective negotiations with the Treaty Powers.

Although in the preliminary stage of the negotiations the impression had been given by China that renunciation of treaty rights would bring freedom of residence and movement in the interior, the clause relating to the right to carry on commerce permitted such activity only "where nationals of any other nation are entitled to do so." This once more restricted Germany to areas open under the "Unequal Treaties."⁸⁶

Germany also agreed to accept the right of China to claim reparations. The interim amount was set at \$4,000,000 (Mexican)⁸⁷ in cash. The remainder, when determined, was to be paid in debentures of the Tientsin-Pukow and Hukuang railways. The amount would be equal to one-half the proceeds of the value of German property liquidated by China and half the value of the property sequestered but not yet liquidated. In excess of this amount, China would also receive compensation for costs of internment arising out of the war.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Of course, if China had consented to allow German nationals the right of trade and residence in the interior, by most-favored nation principles this would have been extended to nationals of the Treaty Powers as well.

⁸⁷ The "Mexican" silver dollar was one of the units of currency used by China. In the early 1920's, it was worth 8.421 to the British Pound Sterling.

⁸⁸ Eight German officers and one hundred and fifty-two men had been interned in China during the war. The majority consisted of the

A concession of some importance for Germany was China's undertaking to cease immediately the liquidation of German property. All proceeds of liquidation and the property still sequestered would be returned to the private owners once the above-mentioned reparations costs were met by the German government. This in effect would reestablish the German commercial and trading community in China. Furthermore, German trademarks would again be recognized and protected once they had been re-registered with the Chinese Maritime Customs Administration.

Finally, China agreed to restore the real property of the *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank* and the Ching Hsing Mines in so far as it had not as yet been liquidated, a promise which was not immediately kept.⁸⁹ The agreements provided for discussion on a junior level to determine the procedure to be followed in assessing and restoring unliquidated assets.

Press comments on the Treaty generally were favorable in both China and Germany. The Chinese press was especially pleased with the abolition of consular jurisdiction. The *Hsin She Hui Pao*, for example, editorialized that the Sino-German Treaty marked "the beginning of the

complement of torpedo-boat *S-90* and the Peking Legation guard. The remainder (48) were German prisoners-of-war who had escaped Russian confinement and made their way to China. Internment costs amounted to \$3,000,000 (Mex.). PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag, III, Legation Peking to AA, K. No. 157, Anlage 2, April 15, 1921. The *S-90* had sortied from the Japanese-blockaded harbor of Tsingtao on October 17, 1914 and sunk the Japanese cruiser *Takachiho*. This vessel had been the flagship of the Japanese Navy during the Sino-Japanese War and was revered by the Japanese. The *S-90* was then beached in Chinese waters and the crew subsequently interned by China while the vessel fell into Japanese hands. See Morse and MacNair, II, 845.

⁸⁹ *Infra*.

end of consular jurisdiction."⁹⁰ The press in Germany was impressed in particular with the formulas derived for avoiding a direct recognition of the Versailles Treaty.⁹¹ The only discordant note was sounded by the Entente-controlled press in China, notably the French. The *Journal de Pékin* viewed the treaty as a first step in the recommencement of German expansionism in China. There also was concern over the fact that the treaty disposed of German property without reference to the Allied Reparations Commission. The Japanese-influenced *Shun Tien Shih Pao* was critical of concessions made by Germany which in the long run could prove dangerous to foreign rights and interests in China.⁹² And the *New York Times* expressed the editorial opinion that if the Sino-German Treaty represented what the Germans considered a "model" treaty, perhaps the United States should give up the idea of a separate peace.⁹³

Formal diplomatic representation resumed immediately. The German chief negotiator in Peking, Borch, assumed the function of *chargé d'affaires* until a suitable Minister could be appointed. In Berlin, Dr. Chang Yün-kai assumed the same position. German Consulates-General were reopened in Shanghai, Tientsin, Canton, and Hankow. The reestablishment of consulates in Mukden, Tsinanfu, Tsingtao, Harbin,

⁹⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag, VI, Borch to AA, K. No. 310 (IVb Chi 1806), June 28, 1921. This report is supplemented by many excerpts from Chinese and foreign newspapers in China regarding the treaty.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, V, "Unser Frieden mit China," *Neue Hamburger Zeitung*, August 3, 1921 (VII Chi 1733).

⁹²*Ibid.*, VI, Borch to AA, K. No. 310 (IVb Chi 1806), June 28, 1921. For detailed discussion of French press attitudes, see BA, R2/735, Borch to AA, K. No. 354 (VII Chi 1956), July 15, 1921.

⁹³Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 45.

Chungking, and Hong Kong followed soon after.⁹⁴ Prior to the war, China had maintained but one Consulate-General in Germany. This was reopened (Hamburg), and, because of the expected increase in Sino-German trade, the Wilhelmstrasse anticipated additional Chinese consulates.⁹⁵

In the summer of 1921, a career officer of the Foreign Ministry, the former State Secretary⁹⁶ Dr. Adolf Boyé, was selected to be the first post-war German Minister to China. He submitted his credentials to the Peking government on December 7, 1921.⁹⁷ Prior to departing Germany, Boyé had met with the German commercial interests in order to elucidate the policy which Germany would pursue in China.⁹⁸ It was to be basically a cautious stance, a recognition of Germany's financial and military weakness in the Far East relative to that of the Entente Powers. Germany would not attempt to compete with the western powers in attempting to purchase influence with China through loans and the like, but would instead concentrate on building up confidence with the Chinese by treating them fairly and as equals.

⁹⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: *Deutsche diplomatische und konsularische Vertretungen in China*, VI, Memo (I.H. 1714), July 18, 1931. The Consulate in Hong Kong was to handle affairs in the south until agreement could be reached with the Canton regime. See Chapter II, *infra*. For reasons of economy only one-half of the German consular offices operating in 1914 were re-opened after 1921. See Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 59-66.

⁹⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 9 Chi: *Diplomatische und Konsularische Vertretungen Chinas in Deutschland*, I, n.d. [1921]; Po 2 A Chi: *Vertrag*, V, Memo (VII Chi 1647), July 30, 1921.

⁹⁶Boyé was State Secretary for Economic Affairs from November 1919 to July 1921, a position abolished for economy reasons in 1923.

⁹⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: *Vertretungen in China*, II, Boyé to AA, No. 626 (IV Chi 202), December 9, 1921.

⁹⁸*Ibid.*, I, Memo (VII Chi 1638), July 30, 1921.

Hostility from the western powers was expected, but Boyé hoped to play off British and French rivalry to the advantage of Germany. However, care would have to be exercised lest pro-German elements presently experiencing a resurgence in Great Britain were alienated.

Boyé was correct in assuming that initially Germany would not be warmly welcomed by the western powers in China. He, as Minister, was accepted into the diplomatic community only after some difficulty,⁹⁹ but was easily able to establish cordial relations with the American, Dutch, Italian, and Danish representatives. German consular officers also met with a degree of hostility. For example, the Consular Corps in Tientsin, Hankow, and Shanghai, while in principle admitting German consular officers as members, limited their attendance at Consular Body meetings to regularly scheduled sessions. A distinction had to be made, it was argued, because Germany no longer possessed extra-territoriality rights and therefore had ceased to have a "community of interest" with the Treaty Powers. In most matters under discussion, not only would German representatives have no voice, or find their interests diametrically opposed, but their presence would be "an embarrassment to free discussion."¹⁰⁰

However, the ostracization of German consular officials was not simply attributable to Germany's changed treaty status. A good deal of

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, K. No. 73 (IVb Chi 1050), February 10, 1922. Initially, Boyé was optimistic about Germany's unique status in China, observing that if the Treaty Powers wished to continue the Versailles "exclusion policy," Germany could deal with the Chinese quite adequately on her own. It was only later that he became sceptical about dealing with the Chinese unilaterally. See Chapter III, *infra*.

¹⁰⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: *Vertretungen in China*, II, Boyé to AA, K. No. 73 (IVb Chi 1050), Anlage 1 (His Britannic Majesty's Consulate-General in Shanghai to Thiel, Shanghai, January 13, 1922), February 10, 1922.

bitterness against Germany engendered in the late conflict continued to persist for many years among both junior and senior representatives of the Allied powers. For example, the German Consul-General in Canton, Dr. E. Remy, despite accreditation from the Peking government and German recognition after June 1923 of the *de facto* status of the Canton government,¹⁰¹ was not invited to participate in the meeting of the local Consular Corps until October 17, 1924.¹⁰² Initially, it was thought that this enforced exclusion from the community of the western powers redounded to the benefit of Germany. After all, Germany did not participate in the common *démarches* of the Treaty Powers,¹⁰³ thereby fragmenting the unity of China's oppressors.

The resumption of formal relations was a minor problem compared to the implementation of the financial clauses of the Sino-German Agreements. Widely varying estimates of the value of German properties sequestered by China were put forward by each party. Moreover, the

¹⁰¹See *infra*, 69-70.

¹⁰²PA, Abt. IV, Po 23 A Chi: *Bürgerkrieg in China*, I, Boyé to AA, K. No. 374 (IV Chi 2662), Anlage 1 (Remy to Legation Peking, October 18, 1924), October 30, 1924.

¹⁰³An exception exists to this statement. Germany added her signature to the joint note of the Powers protesting the Lincheng incident in 1923. The incident involved the seizure of the crack Shanghai-Peking "Blue Express" by bandits at the beginning of May 1923, and the ransoming of the passengers. Boyé had become disillusioned with the policy of dealing with China unilaterally on the basis of "friendship" and signed the note in the belief that not to do so would irrevocably damage the gradual acceptance he had been achieving with the Diplomatic Corps. See Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, III, Boyé to AA, K. No. 332 (IVb Chi 2076), August 16, 1923. For a personal account of the incident, see John B. Powell, *My Twenty-five Years in China* (New York, 1945), 92-124. Powell was editor of an American newspaper in China and was captured on the train. He carried on negotiations for the ransoming with the Chinese governmental authorities.

Peking government was not able to ensure observance of the agreed provisions by the various local and national offices administering German assets.¹⁰⁴ Further, Peking itself day by day was becoming more desperate for funds as a result of the interminable civil war raging throughout the country. Already in June 1921, Borch had discovered that the Ministry of Finance, in violation of the Treaty, had mortgaged to a Japanese bank German properties in Peking, Tientsin, and Peitaiho. The date of redemption had passed and, if \$1,000,000 were not forthcoming immediately, the bank would foreclose and put the property up for sale.¹⁰⁵

In light of these difficulties, Berlin accepted the recommendation put forward earlier by Borch to accept the Chinese estimates on the value of the property to be restored.¹⁰⁶ According to the Chinese, German property confiscated but not yet liquidated, excluding the property of the DAB, amounted to \$14,000,000 (Mex.). Germany therefore under the terms of the agreement would be required to pay China \$4,000,000 in cash and the remainder in railroad obligations. German payments were begun immediately to forestall further liquidation, but in Europe a complication developed.

On June 27, 1921, the *Deutsche Kriegslastenkommission* in accordance with regulations reported the content of the Sino-German

¹⁰⁴For a discussion of the numerous Chinese offices administering German properties, see PA, *Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: Vertrag*, IV, Borch to AA, K. No. 186 (VII Chi 1332), April 26, 1921.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, Legation Peking to AA, K. No. 427 (VII Chi 2137), *Anlage 1* (Waichiao Pu to Legation Peking, July 30, 1921), August 18, 1921.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, K. No. 367 (VII Chi 1973), July 20, 1921.

Treaty to the Allied Reparations Commission in Paris.¹⁰⁷ The latter claimed that Germany had violated Article 260 of the Versailles Treaty by accepting financial obligations which contemplated the use of German-held Chinese railway bonds. Under the terms of Article 260, the German state was expected to take over all rights which German nationals had held in any public utility in China, Russia, Turkey, Austria-Hungary, or Bulgaria and transfer said rights to the Reparations Commission. The fact that China had not adhered to the Versailles Treaty was declared of no consequence.¹⁰⁸

After a lengthy correspondence, the Reparations Commission reversed itself and permitted Germany to proceed with fulfilling the financial obligations toward China by transferring bonds of the Tientsin-Pukow and Hukuang railways.¹⁰⁹ However, Germany would be required to turn over to the Reparations Commission the balance of Chinese securities held by her.¹¹⁰ Further, the Commission protested

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, *Deutsche Kriegslastenkommission* to AA, No. W. 3964 (VII Chi 1901), September 6, 1921.

¹⁰⁸ Borch had broached the question to the Waichiao Pu which had replied that China did not consider herself obligated by Article 260. *Ibid.*, V, Borch to AA, K. No. 306 (VII Chi 1724), June 28, 1921.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, VII, *Commission des Réparations*, Paris, to *Kriegslastenkommission*, December 30, 1921.

¹¹⁰ Under the Brussels Food Agreement of 1919, Germany had been authorized to liquidate her securities from the 1896 and 1898 loans to China in order to purchase foodstuffs. In 1921, Germany still had in her possession the following Chinese obligations:

1) Reorganisation Loan	.....	1903	.....	£ 3,590,200
2) Tientsin-Pukow Bonds	.....	1908	.....	1,777,480
3) Tientsin-Pukow Bonds	.....	1910	.....	1,529,600
4) Hukuang Loan	.....	1911	.....	689,400

Ibid., VIII, Memo (IVb Chi 1687), September 5, 1921.

that under terms of Article 248 of the Versailles Treaty Germany had had no authority to enter into such an agreement without its consent.

At the beginning of 1922, Germany transmitted to China the remainder of the reparations sum of \$4,000,000 (Mex.) in cash. Immediately upon signature of the Treaty, Germany had also begun to pay the \$3,000,000 (Mex.) "internment costs" in twelve monthly payments. By May 1922, the eleventh payment had been made, but the twelfth and final payment was withheld in order to exert pressure on China in fulfilling her end of the bargain, and because of the collapse of the current Peking regime. Nevertheless, during the course of 1922 the bulk of German property was restored. The process was slow, not because of any reluctance on the part of Peking to fulfill its treaty obligations, but because of administrative difficulties arising from the chaotic domestic situation.¹¹¹

One major outstanding problem remained in 1922 to plague German-Chinese relations. In the Treaty of May 1921, China had agreed to restore the real property of the *DAB*. In August 1921, W. W. Yen, now Foreign Minister in the Peking regime, informed the German Legation in Peking that China would be unable to conform to her obligations since earlier a promise had been given to the Diplomatic Corps to exclude Germany from participating in the banking business in China.¹¹² A reassessment of this problem was under discussion between the two countries when China's central administration virtually collapsed in

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, Legation Peking to AA (VII Chi 2374), September 22, 1921.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, VI, Borch to AA, K. No. 407 (VII Chi 1992), August 8, 1921; *PA, Büro des Reichsministers* [hereafter cited as *RM*], 37 *Chi*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 66, July 7, 1924.

1922 because of civil war. This and other pending questions were put off for the interim.¹¹³

The DAB dispute and the disposition of German properties in China was finally resolved two years later.¹¹⁴ After arduous negotiations,¹¹⁵ an exchange of notes on June 6/7, 1924 restored the real property of the DAB and furthermore permitted it to resume its pre-war function as a bank of issue. China also promised to restore the balance of German property still in her possession. In return, Germany was to pay one-half of the value of the properties restored since 1921 which was mutually agreed to amount to between \$69,000,000 and \$70,000,000 (Mex.). Germany, it will be recalled, had transmitted \$4,000,000 (Mex.) at the beginning of 1922 and the remainder of her obligation was to consist of railroad bonds, now determined to amount to some \$35,000,000 (Mex.). Germany also agreed to assume the obligations of China toward private German citizens.¹¹⁶

¹¹³PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, III, Memo (IVb Chi 2378), December 1, 1922.

¹¹⁴Agreement was finally reached during the brief premiership of Sun Pao-ch'i, Minister to Berlin, 1907-1909.

¹¹⁵The signing of the agreement was preceded by a cabinet crisis in Peking and only after the formation of a new cabinet did the Sun Pao-ch'i government decide to complete the exchange of notes. The agreement was signed without any reference to parliament and in violation of the constitution. See the lengthy and detailed report of Boyé in BA, R2/738: *Schaden gegen Deutsche in China*, AA to Finance Ministry (IV B 1579), *Anlage* (Boyé to AA, J. No. 1625, June 10, 1924), July 3, 1924. For further details, see Stanley F. Wright, *China's Customs Revenue since the Revolution of 1911* (Shanghai, 1935), 145-52; 159-60.

¹¹⁶PA, Direktoren-Handakten, Trautmann: *China - Verträge*. In 1924, this amounted to 52,402,767 Marks. BA, R2/737, AA to Reichsministerium für Wiederaufbau, *Anlage* I (Legation Peking to AA, K. No. 132, April 5, 1924) (IVb Chi 1046), April 27, 1924. Earlier Germany

On the face of it, Germany made the bulk of concessions in the Sino-German Agreements restoring peace. She had, of course, lost her dominant position in Shantung as a result of the war. Admission of this loss of influence in one of China's wealthiest provinces was simply recognizing a *de facto* result of World War I in the Far East. Germany also had relinquished that special and irritating status referred to as "Unequal Treaty rights." But a new age was dawning for China, and Germany's loss of extraterritoriality and other special privileges would, in the course of events, prove to be a valuable asset. Later, when the nationalist revolution in China hit full stride, Germany would derive comfort from the fact that she was no longer a full-fledged member of the western camp in China. Germany would chafe under the supposed slights of the Chinese during the years immediately preceding the triumph of the Nationalist regime in 1927, but ultimately the political capital derived from the years of equal and reciprocal relations would make Germany second only to the United States in terms of prestige in China. She had chosen in the Sino-German Treaty of 1921 to forego political influence in return for friendship and commercial exchange. Success in this course would eventually enable her to exercise considerable political influence in China as well.

had agreed in the German-British Agreement of April 5, 1923 that China should use her holdings of German assets to compensate British creditors of German nationals in China. Djang, 204-05; and, esp., BA, R2/989, *Liquidierung deutschen Eigentums innerhalb der englischen Interessensphäre in China*, "Agreement relating to German Debts and Property in China," April 5, 1923.

CHAPTER II

GERMANY AND THE RISE OF THE KUOMINTANG

The diplomatic relations of all powers with China in the decades following the collapse of the Ch'ing Dynasty in 1911 were immensely complicated by the deterioration of a central authority and the concurrent proliferation of autonomous warlord regimes. Germany, after 1921, was not exempt from the problems inherent in the lack of a stable governing authority in China. The most troublesome of the effectively independent governments which emerged after 1916 proved to be the succession of regimes established in China's southern province of Kwangtung.

The appearance of this opposition government was a direct result of President Yüan Shih-k'ai's abortive restoration of the imperial system in 1915-1916. During the final months of 1915, Yuan had made preparation to ascend the throne himself, but the consequent revolt of the military governors in the southern provinces of Yunnan and Kweichow, and the rapid spread throughout the country of opposition to his scheme persuaded him to drop the project by March 1916.¹ Yüan died a few months later, but his handiwork could not be undone. All China had fragmented and a central government in effective control of the whole nation would not again emerge until the success of the Communists in 1949.

¹For details see Jerome Ch'en, *Yuan Shih-k'ai 1859-1916: Brutus Assumes the Purple* (London, 1961), 196ff.; Clubb, 52-58.

In May 1916, a month prior to Yüan's death, the southern military leaders of Yunnan, Kwangsi, Kweichow, and Kwangtung proclaimed independence from Peking and organized the so-called Joint Military Affairs Office. Other provinces followed suit in announcing their own independence, and complete disintegration of the country threatened. However, Yüan's disappearance from the scene in Peking temporarily arrested the impending fragmentation of the country. A semblance of republicanism was restored in Peking with the resurrection of the 1912 Constitution, the reassembling of Parliament, and the assumption of the Presidency by the former Vice-President, Li Yüan-hung. The new Peking government immediately attempted to accommodate the southern military leaders and in July 1916 granted the new title of *tuchün* to the Provincial Governors. Further, a tacit recognition of the semi-autonomy of the provincial governments was implicit in the simultaneous confirmation of their right to raise revenue locally.²

At this time, the various military governors accepted the legality of the restored Republican Government in Peking, but the respite for China's unity was short-lived. Actual power in the north upon Yüan's demise had fallen into the hands of the Peiyang clique, a group of powerful military figures originating in Yüan Shih-k'ai's Peiyang Army. Tuan Ch'i-jui, the Premier under Yüan when the latter occupied the Presidency, emerged as the most powerful of these men. The ensuing power struggle between Tuan and President Li Yüan-hung, another imperial restoration attempt in 1917, and the dissolution once again of Parliament resulted once more in the secession of the southern *tuchüns*. A new opposition government was established in Canton, and Sun Yat-sen

²Clubb, 62. See Appendix C, *infra*, for an outline of Chinese domestic events, 1915-1931.

returned from Shanghai to assume the titular leadership. A military expedition was launched against Peking which degenerated into a war of all against all. Other provincial *tuchuns*, notably Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria and Yen Hsi-shan in Shansi, seized the opportunity to consolidate their authority within their respective provinces.

The next few years witnessed a situation of bewildering complexity in China. In the north, the Peiyang party split into the Anhwei and the Chihli cliques and musical chairs began to be played with the offices of the Peking government. These two major factions were aided or opposed by other warlord³ regimes according to the dictates of momentary advantage. Almost continual warfare went on in north China. In the south, a reorganization of the Military Government in Canton in April 1918 resulted in the departure of Sun Yat-sen for Shanghai once more, and the southern government fell under the domination of two Kwangsi military leaders, Lu Jung-t'ing and Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan.⁴ Various attempts at compromise between north and south ultimately proved sterile and the estrangement took on a permanent character.

In October 1920, Ch'en Chiung-ming, a previous Kwangtung military figure now based in Fukien province, returned to his native province and drove the Kwangsi militarists from Canton. Ch'en was an old revolutionary partisan of Sun Yat-sen and the latter returned in

³A good characterization of "warlordism" can be found in James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yü-hsiang* (Stanford, 1966), 16-30. The conceptualization of "warlordism" is discussed in detail by Jerome Ch'en, "Defining Chinese Warlords and their Factions," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XXXI, No. 3 (1968), 563-600.

⁴Li Chien-nung, 386ff.

November to participate in the reestablished military government. In the interim, Sun once again had reorganized his followers into the Kuomintang, and the old Parliament once more reassembled in Canton in January 1921. In April, Sun was elected Provisional President of China and formally assumed the office on May 5, 1921 at Canton. However, as events were to demonstrate, actual power remained firmly in the hands of warlord Ch'en Chiung-ming.

This, then, was the situation which confronted German diplomatic officials when the Sino-German Treaty of May 20, 1921 was signed. It will be recalled that the primary motive guiding Germany in the negotiations was the imperative need to terminate the continuing sequestration and liquidation of German property. In the course of the negotiations, the Peking regime had repeatedly assured the German negotiator, Consul von Borch, that the southern government would recognize all provisions of the Treaty as binding since the two regimes maintained a "united front" in the field of foreign policy.⁵

These assurances did not prove correct. Sun Yat-sen was quick to recognize the advantages for his own regime if Germany could be coerced into at least a *de facto* recognition. Furthermore, Sun, always the opportunist, decided to seize the opportunity to attempt to secure a new foreign patron in Germany. His earlier relationship with Japanese interests had come to an end as the result of various factors,⁶

⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag, VI, Borch to AA, K. No. 393 (VII Chi 1972), August 3, 1921.

⁶In the years immediately after Yüan Shih-k'ai's death, the Japanese had devoted all their attention to financial support of pro-Japanese warlords in the Peking government, notably Tuan Ch'i-jui. The Shantung settlement at Paris and the subsequent May Fourth Movement with its strongly anti-Japanese character eliminated the option to any

particularly the Japanese encroachment on China's sovereignty since 1914, and the Chinese revolutionary's famous turn to Soviet Russia for support, inaugurated with the Sun-Joffe Agreement of January 1923, was still in the future.⁷

Sun's attempt to secure German assistance for his regime at this juncture is not surprising. Germany, of all the major powers, was the least potentially dangerous ally. The World War and subsequent events, including the friendly but impotent attitude demonstrated in the 1921 Sino-German Treaty, clearly underlined the fact that henceforth Germany would not be likely to pursue an imperialist policy in the Far East. In addition, Germany's technical competence was highly regarded in China, and her military capabilities had not lost their luster as a result of defeat in the late war.⁸ Moreover, Sun, like many Chinese of his generation, had a great admiration for Germany and was not reticent in expressing it.⁹ It will be recalled further that he initially had opposed China's entry into the war in 1917 against the Central Powers although finally following suit for tactical reasons.

Actually, Sun Yat-sen had attempted to enlist German support

Chinese revolutionary and nationalist of openly seeking cooperation with Japan. Moreover, during the years 1918-1922, Japanese attention was focused in the north on Chang Tso-lin in Manchuria and the Siberian intervention. For details, see Clubb, 74ff.; Jansen, *passim*; and James William Morley, *The Japanese Thrust into Siberia, 1918* (New York, 1957), *passim*.

⁷ See, *inter alia*, Conrad Brandt, *Stalin's Failure in China 1924-1927* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), *passim*; Robert C. North, *Moscow and Chinese Communists*, (2nd ed.; Stanford, 1963), *passim*.

⁸ See Chapter V, *infra*.

⁹ PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, II, Borch to AA, K. No. 239 (VII Chi 1530), May 24, 1921.

for his cause once before.

Toward the end of the European war, in November 1918, Abel Tsao,¹⁰ an emissary from the then out-of-power Chinese revolutionary, arrived in Christiania, Norway, from New York.¹¹ He had instructions to make contact with the German government, presumably with ex-Minister to China Hintze, and to suggest a scheme of cooperation. Perhaps the Chinese were thinking of the talks initiated in 1917 by the departing diplomat. Certainly Hintze had advanced to a position of some influence in the Imperial government since then. After serving in Christiania on special assignment during the latter months of 1917, he had become State Secretary of the Foreign Office on July 9, 1918.

If Sun Yat-sen hoped to exploit Hintze's position in order to receive financial support, events had overtaken such an opportunity. By the time Sun's emissary arrived in Europe, Hintze had been replaced (October 14, 1918) as State Secretary and the war was nearing its close.

Nevertheless, Hintze, acting as Foreign Office representative with the *O.H.L.* since October 18,¹² was eager to reestablish relations with Sun and proposed that Abel Tsao make his way to Berlin and explain his proposals in person.¹³

¹⁰ Abel Tsao had acted before 1917 as a contact man between Sun Yat-sen and the German Legation in Peking. *PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, IX*, Memo Knipping (A42651), December 20, 1917.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, XI, Mutius (Christiania) to AA, No. 466 (A47626), November 7, 1918.

¹² Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey, eds., *Die Regierung des Prinzen Max von Baden* (Düsseldorf, 1962), 275, n. 20.

¹³ *PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, XI*, Hintze to Legation Christiania, No. 2789, November 10, 1918. Abel Tsao was travelling under the name "Tsao Kun Chen." *Ibid.*, Brockdorff-Rantzau (Copenhagen) to Berlin, No. 910 (A50124), November 24, 1918. Additional research is necessary before China's role in the wider context of Hintze's foreign policy,

The plan the Chinese had concocted was truly fantastic at this late stage of the war. Germany was to pressure the Bolsheviks into permitting German prisoners-of-war in Siberia to open and secure a path for Chinese foodstuffs and raw materials to the west. Not only would China provide Germany with unlimited matériel to continue the war, but large numbers of men also would be forthcoming. After a successful conclusion of the war, Germany would be willingly admitted to participate in the construction of a new Chinese nation.¹⁴ Tsao only arrived in Berlin some two weeks after the Armistice, however, and it was too late for anything to save the situation for Germany, much less such a fanciful scheme as this. Abel Tsao returned to China without securing any concrete German support for the southern revolutionary cause.

There was no further opportunity for contact between the German Foreign Ministry and Sun Yat-sen for almost two years. In the spring of 1920, the return of Germany diplomatic personnel to China in the form of Borch's negotiating team once again permitted the resumption of contacts. Immediately upon Consul Schirmer's return to China, he established contact with Sun Yat-sen in Shanghai. The German motive is obscure: Sun was out of power and negotiations were nearing fruition

particularly with reference to the *Ostpolitik* and Soviet Russia, can be fixed with any certainty. On Hintze's policy as State Secretary see Winfried Baumgart, *Deutsche Ostpolitik 1918: Von Brest-Litovsk bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges* (München, 1966), *passim*; Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht: Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914/1918* (2nd. ed.; Düsseldorf, 1962), 759ff.; Gerhard Ritter, *Staatskunst und Kriegshandwerk: Das Problem des "Militarismus" in Deutschland*, IV, *Die Herrschaft des deutschen Militarismus und die Katastrophe von 1918* (München, 1968), 386ff.

¹⁴PA, Abt. 1A, China 7, XI, Mutius to Berlin, No. 466 (A47626), November 7, 1918.

with the Peking regime. Sun, however, seems to have eagerly accepted the opening of discussions; he was still seeking allies to promote his return to power. Apparently German aid was requested, but Schirmer refused to consider any involvement in the internal strife in China.¹⁵ The government in the north was still the internationally recognized regime, and it was with this power that Germany must conclude a settlement.

Sun was not willing to let the door close entirely on future German aid to his cause. With his departure for Canton once more in the autumn of 1920, he left Abel Tsao behind to maintain constant contact with Schirmer.¹⁶

The conclusion of the Sino-German Treaty in May 1921 meant that German consular activity had to be resumed in the south. The Foreign Ministry was intent upon achieving fulfillment of the treaty provisions regarding restoration or compensation for German property sequestered and liquidated, and the resumption of normal commercial relations. However, the Wilhelmstrasse was well aware of the potential difficulties which could arise as a result of the existence of an effectively independent rival government in the south of China. A German representative had to be reestablished in this area to deal with the local authorities, and with this in mind Vice-Consul Wagner, under orders from Berlin, made his way from Peking to Canton in order

¹⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: *Südchinesische Republik: Sitz Canton*, I, excerpt from private letter Schirmer to Knipping (VII Chi 2719), October 7, 1921.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

to reopen consular services.¹⁷

The first indication of the impending difficulties had been the publication in July 1921 in the semi-official *Canton Times* of an article on the attitude of the Southern Government toward the recent Sino-German Treaty. The legality of the Peking regime was denied, and hence any treaty concluded by the north was deemed invalid in the provinces under southern administration. The article stated that therefore a German consulate could not be reopened in the south, nor would German property sequestered as a result of the war be restored.¹⁸

The paper further argued:

If Germany wishes to renew diplomatic relations with China, her representatives should negotiate with the Government that represents the Chinese people and not with a group of officials who simply retain their posts by the sufferance of a few militarists.¹⁹

The implications were quite clear: this article could only be interpreted as an attempt to force the German government to deal directly with the southern regime and hence tacitly admit its *de facto* existence.

This development could not be looked upon with equanimity by the German authorities. Extensive concessions of principle had been made to the Peking regime in order to resume normal trade relations and

¹⁷*Ibid.*, private letter Wagner (Canton) to Maltzan (VII Chi 2411), October 4, 1921. Wagner was appointed Consul in Canton on September 24, 1921.

¹⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag, VI, Borch to AA, K. No. 393 (VII Chi 1972), Anlage 2 (*Canton Times*, July 19, 1921), August 3, 1921. The views expressed in the article were confirmed as representing the official policy of the Southern Government by the Dutch Consulate in Canton on July 29, 1921. *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, K. No. 415 (VII Chi 2088), Anlage 3 (Dutch Consulate, Canton to German Commission for China, Peking, July 29, 1921), August 13, 1921.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, K. No. 393 (VII Chi 1972), Anlage 2 (*Canton Times*, July 19, 1921), August 3, 1921. See also *Deutsches Zentralarchiv* (Potsdam), *Akten der Deutschen Gesandtschaft in China*, No. 943, 354, quoted in Mehner, 29.

to attain the cessation of the liquidation of German property. Now, in one of the more prosperous commercial areas of China, these attainments were threatened. Fortunately, the Maritime Customs Authorities in Canton still remained subordinate to the Peking regime, and German trade therefore would not be adversely affected in so far as the application of tariffs was concerned. However, strife with the Southern Government could lead to boycotts or other unpleasant repercussions amongst the Chinese public, and, of course, the continuing liquidation of German property hampered the restoration of normal commercial operations.

In order to forestall a confrontation, Schirmer took steps to foster cordial relations between German representatives and Sun Yat-sen. As Wagner passed through Shanghai on the way to Canton, Schirmer introduced him to Abel Tsao. Tsao was persuaded to accompany the German Vice-Consul to Canton in order to introduce him personally to Sun. Apparently, Schirmer for his part had maintained quite cordial relations with the rebels as they expected him to come to Canton to open negotiations, and the Civil Governor of Kwangsi had even sent him a telegram to that effect.²⁰

The public refusal of the Southern Government to accept a German Consular official in the area under its control, as Schirmer pointed out to Berlin,²¹ clearly proved that Germany was not instrumental in the establishment of the southern regime as some press articles had it.

²⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep., I, excerpt from private letter Schirmer to Knipping (VII Chi 2719), October 7, 1921.

²¹*Ibid.*

This nevertheless was small consolation in view of the attitude taken by the Canton Nationalists. Before Sun Yat-sen would consent to the German *desiderata*, it was likely that he would insist upon some form of tacit recognition. In turn, this would seriously damage German standing with the Peking regime, and could intensify hostility from the Treaty Powers. All German attempts to work out a compromise with the southern leader therefore had to be clandestine.

Thus, when Wagner arrived at his post in Canton, he visited Sun Yat-sen privately and unofficially in the latter's home on September 25, 1921.²² It is of some historical importance to consider this meeting in detail since it sheds further light on the character and opportunism of the "Father of Modern China." Sun said first that he was the legally elected President of China and the *de facto* ruler of the six large and wealthy southern provinces. He asked Wagner if Germany was prepared to cooperate unofficially with him in reconstructing China. The Chinese revolutionary claimed not to be seeking formal diplomatic recognition since, he asserted, this already could have been obtained from the Japanese under certain conditions.²³ Sun professed to have refused the Japanese offer, instead putting forward demands of his own - namely the revocation of the "independence" of Korea from China secured by Japan in the Treaty of Shimonoseki, a significant alteration in the thinking of the Chinese nationalist.

²²*Ibid.*, Wagner (Canton) to AA (VII Chi 2491), September 26, 1921.

²³The Japanese ostensibly did offer recognition in May 1921 in return for Sun's acceptance of the Twenty-One Demands. *FRUS* 1921, I, 330-32, Vice-Consul Price (Canton) to Secretary of State, No. 255, May 2, 1921.

Sun stated further that he saw in Germany the only nation capable of developing China's "boundless wealth."²⁴ According to the Chinese leader, the only other possible source of assistance for China was the United States, and that country possessed too extensive a scope for economic development at home to be of value.²⁵ Sun now hoped for far-reaching aid from Germany in all areas of administrative and economic life. It was Germany's "intelligence and well-proven capability in large-scale organization" which attracted him. He claimed to be prepared to give over into German hands the fields of finance, economics, administration, education, and military affairs. The Chinese revolutionary closed his remarks with the plea: "View China as a substitute for your lost colonies; come, help me, tackle the task as if you were administering a piece of your own country!"²⁶

These were prophetic words in light of the later role which Germany was to play in the civil and military affairs of China after the triumph of the Nationalist Government. But at this time, Sun's precarious position both within the southern regime and in China at large precluded any such collaboration. Moreover, even if domestic conditions in China had been auspicious for such an extensive project,

²⁴ Sun's admiration for German competence was already well known in the Foreign Ministry. See, for example, *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, II, Borch to AA, K. No. 239 (VII Chi 1530), May 24, 1921.

²⁵ Sun had already appealed to the United States for recognition and support in May 1921. See *FRUS 1921*, I, 332-40. Ma Soo (personal representative of Sun Yat-sen, Washington) to President Harding, Enclosure (Sun Yat-sen to President Harding, June 16, 1921); Price to Secretary of State, No. 258, May 7, 1921; Secretary of State to Consul-General Canton, June 25, 1921. Sun's requests were consistently rebuffed. See also Clubb, 119.

²⁶ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Stüd. Rep.*, I, Wagner to AA (VII Chi 2491), September 26, 1921.

Germany's international and domestic plight in 1921 completely excluded any such possibility. German-Chinese cooperation on the scale proposed by Sun would have to wait for a future in which both countries had regained their freedom of action.²⁷

The request for German assistance was also put forward in Europe. Sun had dispatched a personal representative to Germany in order to contact suitable business interests. In September 1921, General Chu Ho-chung (Chu Woh Chung) arrived in Germany from Hong Kong. He called immediately upon an old acquaintance in the Krupp organization, G. Baur, to solicit support for the Nationalist cause. Chu sketched a bright picture of the prospects of the southern regime to Baur and outlined his mission in Germany. He was empowered to recruit technical experts in the fields of finance, public administration, trade and industry, mining, forestry, agriculture, transportation, education, and military affairs. Chu was particularly interested in securing the services of qualified personnel in the areas of arsenal construction, commissariat affairs, and warship (especially submarine) construction - just those fields which had the most potential for international repercussions. The business organization which supplied these technicians to the southern regime would, of course, receive the contracts involved.

Before Krupp was prepared to become committed, Baur queried the

²⁷ Sun's desire for a German alliance persisted for the next few years. In 1922, the *Hong Kong Telegraph* published some of Sun's private papers, which had been stolen from the revolutionary and included some of his secret correspondence seeking a German alliance. Sun publicly acknowledged the authenticity of the documents. Lyon Sharman, *Sun Yat-sen: His Life and its Meaning* (New York, 1934), 246.

Wilhelmstrasse as to its policy vis-à-vis the South Government.²⁸ The Foreign Ministry was lukewarm to such an involvement at this time. Baur was informed by telephone that General Chu's assessment of the prospects for Sun's government was excessively optimistic. Therefore, the time was not ripe for any official support - complications would inevitably ensue with Peking and the Treaty Powers. However, if private individuals wished to enter contracts with the southern authorities, the German government would make no objection. These individuals should be informed, though, of the instability and financial weakness chronic to the South. Perhaps it would be more advisable to conclude the contractual arrangements with the provincial government of Kwangtung instead of with Sun's regime.²⁹

Major-General Chu Ho-chung, with his many high placed contacts in Germany, was a well-selected envoy. Besides knowing Baur at Krupp, he was acquainted from pre-war days in Berlin with the later head of the Eastern Division in the Foreign Ministry, *Ministerialdirektor* Maltzan,³⁰ and with the former Minister to China, Hintze. Furthermore, since he had received his military education in Germany prior to the war, it can be taken for granted that he had many influential contacts in German military circles.³¹

²⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep., I, private letter of G. Baur (Alfred Krupp Aktiengesellschaft, Essen) to Knipping (VII Chi 2048), September 28, 1921.

²⁹*Ibid.*, Memo Bethcke (zu IV Chi 2048), October 1, 1921.

³⁰Maltzan became head of the *Ostabteilung* in January 1922. He served briefly in 1921 as Minister to Athens. See Walsdorff, 43.

³¹For more on General Chu, see Chapter V, *infra*.

On October 29, 1921, Chu established direct contact for the first time with the Foreign Ministry. Because of his unofficial status, the meeting took place at the home of Knipping. Chu announced that he was an unofficial representative of Sun Yat-sen³² and outlined his mission in Germany. The discussion ranged over many topics, particularly the bankruptcy of the Peking government at home and abroad. The general emphasized his many contacts in German industrial and governmental circles, and asserted that he had in his pocket a number of contracts with individuals suitable for employ as advisors to the "true republic" of China. No objections to the hiring of German nationals were raised by Knipping, but neither was any official sanction offered at this time for Chu's endeavors.³³

With no barriers placed in his way by the German authorities, Chu continued with his hiring of civilian technical advisors. He was greatly assisted in his task by the former Minister to China, Hintze.³⁴ The Admiral was a convinced advocate of the viability and the necessity of economic cooperation between Germany, China, and Russia - the "heartland."³⁵ With his contacts in the upper reaches of German society,

³²This was confirmed by a dispatch from Wagner received December 1, 1921. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep.*, I, Wagner to AA (VII Chi 2491), September 26, 1921.

³³*PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag*, VII, Memo Knipping (VII Chi 2286), October 31, 1921.

³⁴Chu wrote to Sun: "Since I have obtained Hintze's help I have greatly progressed and the scope of my activities is a great deal larger," quoted in Mehner, 37.

³⁵For example, the rumors in the press in 1922 about a possible alliance between Germany, China, and Russia stemmed from a letter of Hintze's to Minister Schmidt-Elskop on September 14, 1921 in which the former mentioned putting forward a proposal to Chu for the cementing of economic ties between the three countries. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep.*, II, Note (zu IVb Chi 499), n.d. (initialled by *RM, RK, RP*). It is interesting to note, first that such a "continental bloc" was

Hintze was able to introduce General Chu to many influential people. This promotion of the interests of the Nationalist regime was carried on by Hintze,³⁶ without informing the Foreign Ministry of his activities, a first instance of many such occasions when right-radical individuals and organizations in Germany aided the Nationalists. These activities naturally increased as military and economic cooperation between Germany and China became closer after the victory of the Kuomintang.

By May 1922, General Chu had concluded verbal agreements with four highly placed technical advisors, and more significantly, from the point of view of future developments, had made contact with General Hans von Seeckt, then chief of the army command. Presumably, Chu's motive

gaining favor simultaneously with various Chinese factions, particularly the Nationalists (PA, *Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeine auswärtige Politik* I, Boyé to AA, K. No. 308 (IVb Chi 1954), July 3, 1922), and second that Karl Radek, a Soviet emissary in Berlin, brought up the same subject in December 1922 with Colonel Otto Hasse, chief negotiator on the German side in the September 1921 talks on Soviet-*Reichswehr* military and industrial collaboration (and a close collaborator of General von Seeckt's). See F. L. Carsten, *Reichswehr und Politik 1918-1933* (Berlin, 1964), 149. This detail is omitted from the English revised edition, but all further citations (unless specifically mentioned) are from *The Reichswehr and Politics 1918-1933* (Oxford, 1966). See also following note. Mehner, 30ff., offers a Marxist interpretation of Sun's interest in a China-Germany-Soviet Union cooperative alliance.

³⁶ The connection between Hintze, Soviet Russia, and the Nationalists needs further investigation. Hintze's initial contact with Radek was in October 1919 when the latter had been released from imprisonment in Berlin. The former State Secretary (and Colonel Max Bauer) were only two of many important German figures who made contact with the Soviet agent. See E. H. Carr, *German-Soviet Relations Between Two World Wars, 1919-1939* (New York, 1966, orig. 1951), 20-21; Carr, *A History of Soviet Russia: The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1923*, III (London, 1953), 314-15; and Chapter VI, *infra*, for a discussion of the significance. At that time, according to Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, III, 323, Radek opposed alliance with the forces in Germany revolting against Versailles, but by 1921 circumstances had changed, as had Soviet policy. However, Soviet (and Chinese Communist) interest in Sun Yat-sen's party did not awaken until 1922 (the year after Chu's mission to Germany), Radek playing a role in China in bringing about the tactical alliance between the Kuomintang and the Chinese Communist Party in late summer 1922.

in seeking out Seeckt was to secure his support for the hiring and armament purchasing plans of the southerners. It is at least certain that the Chinese solicited Seeckt's assistance in securing a competent general staff officer for employment in south China.³⁷ Chu's initiative however did not bear fruit; in this matter there is no evidence that Seeckt offered support and Chu was ultimately unable to employ a suitable candidate. It is possible that Chu, in all naïveté broached the question of Seeckt himself going to China. At any rate, the idea of visiting China seems to have appealed to the German general.³⁸ Nevertheless, considering Seeckt's high position at this time, such a proposal was a bit premature. Eleven years later, after the situation in both China and Germany had changed drastically, Seeckt would be able to fulfill his desire.

Although Chu was unable to obtain even limited support from Germany army circles, he did manage to secure some assistance from the German government in matters of less consequence. On May 29, 1922 Chu wrote to Chancellor Wirth requesting his intervention in securing the release of one of the prospective civilian advisors, Dr. Schwinning,

³⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: *Stld. Rep.*, II, Memo Bethcke (IVb Chi 987), May 18, 1922. The pertinent reference reads: "Er suche ferner einen deutschen Generalstaboffizier, deshalb habe er in K. mit v.S. gesprochen." *Marginalia*: "Oberst Wetzell?" Wetzell, an old associate of Seeckt's, as a *Generalmajor* became chief of the *Truppenamt* (concealed general staff) in May 1925. Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 206. He joined the later German military advisory group in early 1930 and was replaced by Seeckt in 1934. See *infra*, 270ff.

³⁸Seeckt wrote to his wife from Kissingen on May 11, 1922 that he had been visited by a "South Chinese" who had come to take his leave and speak on "sundry matters." He also writes: "Ich habe mir für alle Fälle die Möglichkeit, selbst nach China zu gehen, offen gehalten." See Hans Meier-Welcker, *Seeckt* (Frankfurt am Main, 1967), 641; Friedrich von Rabenau, *Seeckt: Aus seinem Leben, 1918-1936* (Leipzig, 1940), 271. It is an interesting coincidence that it was just at this time the first *Reichswehr* officers were being sent to Russia for training purposes. See Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 143.

from the employ of the *Dresdener Technische Hochschule* so that he could immediately accompany the general on his return to China.³⁹

This request was granted. The Wilhelmstrasse also agreed to secure the cooperation of the *Reichsdruckerei* in the printing of banknotes for the to-be-established Bank of China.⁴⁰ The Wilhelmstrasse's willingness to accommodate the wishes of Sun's emissary in a modest way stemmed from its desire to ease the position of Wagner in Canton and simultaneously forward an understanding on the return of German property in the south of China.⁴¹ General Chu returned to China in the spring of 1922. A number of German technical advisors accompanied him - but no military experts.

In the south of China, the German position remained very unsatisfactory. Following Consul Wagner's discussion with Sun Yat-sen in September 1921, he had come under increasing pressures in conversations with Sun and other south Chinese leaders who demanded German recognition of the regime. Wagner had consistently resisted the Chinese demands, and ultimately managed to reach a working agreement with the south regime which did not involve official relations or *de facto* recognition.⁴² Nevertheless, Sun's regime persisted in its refusal to recognize the Sino-German Treaty of 1921 and the German government was obliged to accept this situation.

³⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: *Städ. Rep.*, II, Chu Ho-chung to Wirth (IVb Chi 1087), May 29, 1922.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, Memo Bethcke (IVb Chi 987), May 18, 1922.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, Note (zu IV Chi 2632, 2636, 2837, 2638), January 15, 1922.

⁴²*Ibid.*, Wagner to AA (VII Chi 2637), October 14, 1921; Wagner to AA (VII Chi 2638), October 15, 1921.

Notwithstanding the political standoff with the southern government, during the first half of 1922, extensive negotiations were carried on with the city authorities of Canton. The mayor, Sun Fo, the son of Sun Yat-sen by his first wife, attempted to secure German government support for the engagement of German technical experts for the modernization of Canton and the deepening of its harbor. Apparently, the German Foreign Ministry, in the interests of expanding German influence and trade, seriously entertained the project, but events intervened.⁴³

In the spring of 1922 the political scene in south China altered drastically once more. Sun fell out with his nominal subordinate, Ch'en Chiung-ming, and civil war again erupted. By June, the Chinese Nationalist leader, betrayed by his military allies, was in refuge on a gunboat in Canton harbor. In August, with the military situation entirely beyond restoration, Sun departed Canton for the third time and sailed again to Shanghai. Most significant, however, was the fact that developments in the north led to the summoning of the 1913 Parliament back to Peking by the new warlord regime ensconced

⁴³Wagner carried on extensive discussions with the Canton civic authorities, and in Germany various organizations showed great interest. A major role in the negotiations in the latter country was played by the "*Technische Zweckverband fflr Auslandsfragen*," an association comprised of ex-colonial and foreign technical advisors repatriated by the Entente. At the time negotiations collapsed, three prospective advisors were under consideration - Baurat Quedfeld, hydraulic engineer with the Berlin Police, and *Regierungsbaumeister* Dengler and *Regierungsbaumeister* Mayerhofer, both previously employed by the Tientsin-Pukow railway. For a Marxist analysis of this episode, see Mehner, 34-36. The project of constructing a deep-sea harbor at Canton was revived in the autumn of 1926 by Gustav Amann, a German national previously employed by Siemens, China, who had been active in building the Canton-Hankow railway and was a convinced adherent of the Nationalist cause. However, the Foreign Ministry decided that rivalry between Hong Kong and Canton made participation in the project politically too risky. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, IX, Consulate-General Shanghai to

in the northern capital. Sun thereby was deprived not only of his power base in Canton, but of his pretense to legality as well.

Nevertheless, during the course of 1922, the German diplomatic representatives in China were unable to secure recognition of the Sino-German Treaty from the Provincial Government of Kwangtung. The Minister in Peking, Adolf Boyé, had not considered it opportune to approach the Peking government to secure officially its intervention against the provincial authorities.⁴⁴ The German consulate in Canton remained unrecognized by the southern authorities.

In January 1923, internal dissension in the south led to the withdrawal of Ch'en Chiung-ming and brought Sun Yat-sen to Canton once more. The old government was reestablished with Sun as *Generalissimo*. In the interim, the situation had altered with the Nationalists. In January, Sun had initiated the policy of *Entente* with the Soviet Union⁴⁵ which would ultimately lead to his reliance upon Soviet advisors and support, and to the paramount influence of that country in the Nationalist Party and Government.

But even now, in 1923, Sun had not as yet totally relinquished hope of attaining assistance from the West. On August 18, 1923, Sun

AA, J. No. 931 (IV Chi 1548), May 23, 1927; XIII, Memo Michelsen (IV Chi 1386), July 13, 1928; *Handakten, Ha Pol. Min. Dir. Ritter: K. Ritter - China*, Memo Altenburg (e.o. IV Chi 1920), September 29, 1928; Memo Michelsen (zu IV Chi 1919/1920), October 12, 1928; *Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, V, Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 1839 (IV Chi 501), December 28, 1928.

⁴⁴PA, *Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: Vertretungen in China*, II, Boyé to AA, K. No. 30 (IVb Chi 551), January 17, 1923.

⁴⁵According to Allen S. Whiting, *Soviet Policies in China, 1917-1924* (New York, 1954), 201, Soviet diplomacy had "quietly ignored" Sun's revolutionary regime until the January 1923 Sun-Joffe Agreement. Like Germany, Russia directed her efforts for reestablishment of relations at the internationally recognized Peking regimes.

wrote to Teng Chia-yen in Germany suggesting a blue print for the development of China: German technical and industrial skill should be grafted on to China's rich natural resources of raw materials and manpower in order to modernize China and strengthen her defences. In return, China in her gratitude would assist Germany in breaking the shackles of Versailles.⁴⁶ This idea of using China's manpower as a lure to secure German assistance recurred again and again in Sun's mind.

The changed circumstances in the south induced Germany to attempt once more to secure recognition of the 1921 Treaty. Boyé had come to the conclusion that the unstable nature of the regimes in the north made it unlikely that Peking would be able to subordinate the south in the near future. Other powers had come to terms with the southern authorities, dealing with them on a *de facto* basis. Since Sun was still insisting upon a public German initiative prior to any voluntary recognition of the provisions of the 1921 Treaty, Boyé now concluded that some cautiously worded declaration should be issued, sufficient to satisfy the southern leader, yet not of a type that could be interpreted abroad or in Peking as an official recognition of the Government in Canton as independent and sovereign. The Minister was of the view that Germany's diplomatic isolation in the north was sufficiently injurious to German interests without Germany having to suffer discriminatory treatment in the south as well. Boyé therefore recommended that the Foreign Ministry invest the Consular representative in Canton with plenipotentiary powers so that he could deal directly with whatever

⁴⁶*Tsung-li ch'üan-shū* [Complete Writings of President Sun] (Taipeh, 1953), X, Part 2, 1133-1135, quoted in Shao Chuan Leng and Norman D. Palmer, *Sun Yat-sen and Communism* (New York, 1960), 88.

faction happened to be in control of the region. His power was to be limited to concrete questions involving the treatment of German nationals and the seizure, liquidation, etc. of German properties.⁴⁷ The Wilhelmstrasse agreed that this solution to the impasse should be attempted.⁴⁸

The German decision to accommodate Sun Yat-sen by dealing with his regime in a *de facto* manner brought the desired results. It can be surmised that Sun saw the new German policy as a first step toward closer German-Chinese cooperation. Close contacts were established between Dr. Blüsing, the German Consul-General in Shanghai, and the Chinese leader. German properties were released from sequestration and talks began on compensation for previously liquidated German assets.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the German nationals in the area under the sway of the southern government still lacked treaty protection.

Perhaps Sun was moved to ease the situation for Germany in the region controlled by the southern authorities because of his continuing desire to secure German advisors and economic assistance. A second representative, Dang Fan-yen, was dispatched to Germany in order to sound out the German government's attitude. When approached by the Chinese emissary, the German Foreign Minister proved cordial. When and if Dr. Sun was prepared to put forward some specific suggestions in the economic field, the German government would react

⁴⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: *Vertretungen in China*, II, Boyé to AA, K. No. 157 (IVb Chi 1210), April 15, 1923.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, III, Maltzan to Legation Peking, No. 18 (zu IVb Chi 1210), June 3, 1923.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, K. No. 273 (IVb Chi 1752), July 4, 1923.

sympathetically. It was emphasized however, that any economic collaboration between the two countries, although receiving official sanction and support, would have to be strictly private, without the German government contributing any capital or credits.⁵⁰ The Wilhelmstrasse was adamant on one subject - there was to be no employment of German officers as military advisors. Dang was informed that Germany was obligated to inactivity in this sphere by the Versailles Treaty. So long as the Versailles Treaty remained unrevised, the Foreign Ministry could never condone an official German military mission in China.⁵¹

In November 1923, Sun Yat-sen formulated some concrete proposals for Sino-German cooperation.⁵² Starting from the premise that both Germany and China were "suppressed powers," he proposed German government assistance in the development of China's armed forces and the modernization of her economy. He argued that in order "to get rid of the yoke of Versailles," Germany should develop "a great strong modern army in China, and then let China speak for you."⁵³ Further, he proposed German aid in solving China's transportation problem, in developing mining in China to a profitable level, in stabilizing China's currency, etc. With German official and private collaboration, he

⁵⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 Chi: S'ld. Rep., II, Minute by Knipping (IVb Chi 1980), August 27, 1923. The *Anlage* to this report is a translated letter of Sun's to Dang Fan-yen of June 19, 1923.

⁵¹See Chapter V, *infra*.

⁵²Sun's renewed initiative was made despite the arrival of Michael Barodin in Canton the previous month to solidify the Soviet-Kuomintang *Entente*.

⁵³Mehner, 40. Sun's memorandum is in English and was transmitted by Dang Fan-yen to the Wilhelmstrasse.

thought that China's modernization would take only four or five years.

In January 1924, Dr. Blüsing and Dr. E. Remy, Consul-General in Canton, visited the southern President in his headquarters in Canton. Sun again brought up the topic of receiving military assistance from Germany; he was particularly interested in arsenals and weapons. He wondered if it would be feasible for German weapons-firms to construct factories for the production of armaments in China. Apparently, he was still visualizing a far-reaching collaboration, in the political as well as the economic field. Sun, like his envoy before him in 1918, suggested that German-Chinese cooperation could solve the international problems of both countries: "You are disarmed, now you must arm China; that is most likely your only salvation."⁵⁴ Once China's masses were organized and trained, a task which Sun thought would take some three years, Germany would possess the means of attacking France in Annam and England throughout East Asia. When these fanciful schemes evoked no response from his guests, he turned to the more immediate question of employing German advisors. Sun was particularly interested in *Geheimer Admiralitätsrat* Wilhelm Schrameier, an ex-official of the naval administration in Kiaochow before 1914 who had been instrumental in effecting economic and financial reforms in Tsingtao.⁵⁵

⁵⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Stld. Rep., II, Consulate-General Canton to AA (IVb Chi 543), January 19, 1924. This sentence is quoted in English in the original.

⁵⁵Sun had sent a cable to Schrameier on January 5, 1924 offering him employment. Dr. Remy thought that Schrameier would be unable to reform the chaotic finances of the Canton regime, and his failure conceivably could be detrimental to the interests of Germany. It would therefore be preferable that he should not accept. Schrameier accepted in February, 1924. For his pre-war activities in Kiaochow see John E. Schrecker, *Imperialism and Chinese Nationalism: Germany in Shantung* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), 65-72, 206ff. See also *supra*, 22-23.

The unrealistic nature of Sun's schemes⁵⁶ and the fact that his regime had incurred the hostility of the other foreign powers in China⁵⁷ (with whom Germany was striving to resume cordial relations),⁵⁸ obliged the Wilhelmstrasse to proceed with caution. Further reports that General Chu Ho-chung would again visit Germany to solicit support from German industry were accompanied by warnings from the German diplomatic representative in Canton, Remy.⁵⁹ Information in his possession indicated that Sun, because of the cool and hesitant attitude of Berlin toward his proposals for cooperation, had instructed Chu to bypass government offices and get directly in touch with nationalistic and ultra-right organizations. (Remy specifically mentioned Hintze as one possible connection.) Chu's task, according to Remy, was to secure the services of German experts who could establish the groundwork for the establishment of an armaments industry in Canton. Therefore, Chu's movements in Germany should be watched and all

⁵⁶General Chu was no less naive. He joined the conversation near its conclusion and opined that Germany inevitably would go communist, obligating the heavy industries to emigrate. What would be more natural than to Kwangtung Province? "Like a travelling circus," was Dr. Remy's sarcastic comment. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep.*, II, Consulate-General Canton to AA (IVb Chi 543), January 19, 1924.

⁵⁷In the autumn of 1923, Sun had attempted to secure the customs revenue at Canton. This act resulted in a naval demonstration by Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Portugal, and the United States. Germany did not participate in the show of force which won her a degree of "moral" advantage with the southerners. See Clubb, 121-22; *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep.*, II, Consulate-General Canton to AA (IVb Chi 543), January 19, 1924.

⁵⁸See Chapter III, *infra*.

⁵⁹See, e.g., *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep.*, II, Peking to AA (IV Chi 751), *Anlage 1* (Canton to Peking, February 18, 1924), n.d.; Siemens-Schukert Werke to Knipping (IVb Chi 790), March 25, 1924. Chu had been in contact with the Siemens company during his previous German trip.

attempts made to prevent the success of his mission, as otherwise it would provide additional fuel to French propaganda.⁶⁰

This was the beginning of a problem which would plague the German Foreign Ministry for the next decade - the involvement of German weapons experts and military advisors with the southern regime.⁶¹ Actual cooperation between Germany and the Nationalists however was not possible at this time. Germany, for her part, was facing major problems in Europe and had not yet been accepted as a diplomatic equal by the other foreign powers in China. Moreover, negotiations with the northern regime were still in progress which were to culminate in the Sino-German agreements of June 6/7, 1924 which settled outstanding financial problems between the two countries. In view of the precarious history of Sun's regimes and the hostile attitude of the other Powers, Germany had no alternative but to opt for the north at this point. As with all German diplomatic endeavors in China during the 1920's, she preferred to follow rather than lead.

Sun Yat-sen finally gave up hope of securing western aid. It was during these same months that he made his decision to turn to the Soviet Union for support. While addressing the Canton Y.M.C.A. on December 31, 1923, he had stated: "We no longer look to the Western Powers. Our faces are turned toward Russia."⁶² It would be idle to speculate on what effect German collaboration with the southern revolutionaries would have had on future Chinese development. Suffice

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, Peking to AA (IVb Chi 751), *Anlage* 1, n.d.

⁶¹*Infra.*

⁶²Quoted in Clubb, 122.

it to point out that the existing political constellations both within China and internationally precluded any such option for the policy makers in Berlin.

During the next few years, official contact between the German government and the southern regime was minimal. During the course of 1924, Sun's decision to turn to the Soviet Union for aid bore fruit. The Kuomintang turned into a mass party and developed a program which had mass appeal. In foreign affairs, a basic plank of the regime was anti-foreignism. The regime further strengthened itself in the development of a revolutionary army, equipped and advised by Soviet military personnel.⁶³ Further, the military leaders of Kwangsi province opted to associate themselves with the Revolutionary Government.

In the fighting between the southerners and the northern warlords with the accompanying growth in anti-foreign agitation, German nationals were not seriously threatened. The brunt of the agitation was directed against the "imperialist" powers, mainly Japan and Great Britain. Nevertheless, in the disturbances of the autumn of 1924, German inhabitants in Shanghai were sufficiently concerned with the situation (and partisan) to propose enlistment in existing formations for the defense of the foreign settlement or the formation of a German Volunteer Company. The German diplomatic official in Shanghai, Thiel, however, strongly opposed any such move, pointing out

⁶³ See esp. James C. Bowden, "Soviet Military Aid to Nationalist China, 1923-1941," in Raymond L. Garthoff, ed., *Sino-Soviet Military Relations* (New York, 1966), 44-56; John Erickson, *The Soviet High Command: A Military-Political History 1918-1941* (London, 1962), 217-46; Harold R. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* (2nd rev. ed., New York, 1966), 63ff.; Clubb, 123-31; Brandt, 18ff.

that because Germany had renounced extraterritoriality in the 1921 treaty, her citizens no longer had the right to defend such privileges. Boyé, in Peking, concurred with this stand.⁶⁴

As the unrest mounted in China, the Wilhelmstrasse closely watched the situation,⁶⁵ but was careful to avoid taking sides in the escalating confrontation between the foreign powers and the rapidly developing Chinese revolutionary movement. Attempts were also made to continue cordial relations with the southerners without offending the officially recognized Peking government. For example, in March 1925, the German government was invited by the Kuomintang Section in Germany to send a representative to the memorial service for Dr. Sun Yat-sen who had died on March 12. It was recognized that the presence of a representative of the *Reichskanzlei* or an official note of condolences would be used by the Chinese for propaganda purposes. Yet a refusal would also evoke strong feelings among the KMT supporters. A compromise was decided upon in which a medium-rank Foreign Ministry official would attend.⁶⁶

A similar dilemma governed German relations with China during the next few years. During 1925, anti-foreignism reached a peak not seen since the Boxer rebellion. The major turning point in China's relations with the Powers was the Shanghai Incident of May 30, 1925.⁶⁷

⁶⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 23 A Chi: *Bürgerkrieg*, I, Legation Peking to AA, K. No 342 (IV Chi 2511), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Shanghai, J. No. 4177, September 27, 1924), October 8, 1924.

⁶⁵See the many reports and telegrams in PA, RM, 37 Chi, I.

⁶⁶BA, R43I, *Alte Reichskanzlei*, Nr. 56: *Auswärtige Angelegenheiten, China, 1919-1931*, Memo (RK 1999), March 19, 1925; Memo (zu RK 1999), March 21, 1925.

⁶⁷Borg, 20-38.

Strikes, demonstrations, and boycotts swept throughout China in the wake of this outrage. German merchants in China were quick to express their sympathy with the Chinese and to dissociate themselves from the "imperialists."⁶⁸ The German government also refused to participate in the International Investigating Committee established by the western powers, or to sit in any further Diplomatic Body meetings dealing with the affair.⁶⁹

The Foreign Ministry was determined not to antagonize Chinese public opinion during this year of crisis. A suggestion from the *Marineleitung* of the *Reichswehrministerium* that a German warship be dispatched to China to protect German nationals was rebuffed by the Wilhelmstrasse. It was well recognized that the Chinese would interpret such an act as a return to "gun-boat diplomacy" and a closing of ranks with other western powers. In addition, if a German warship should be on the scene when a major anti-foreign outbreak occurred, the landing of troops to protect other foreigners could not be avoided. Even a visit to China by the cruiser *Hamburg* during her prospective world trip in 1926 was opposed by the Foreign Ministry. German relations with China were to remain peaceful and friendly; a showing of the war-flag would serve no purpose.⁷⁰

The German policy of maintaining cordial relations with China was jarred during the winter of 1925-1926. Germany's adherence to the

⁶⁸ See reports in *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Stld. Rep.*, IV-V.

⁶⁹ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 Chi: Innere Politik, Parlaments- und Parteiwesen*, VII, Boyé to AA, No. 39 (IV Chi 1592), August 7, 1925; AA to Legation Peking, No. 54 (zu IV Chi 1592), August 10, 1925.

⁷⁰ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, III, Memo Bethcke (IV Chi 1222), June 23, 1925. Nevertheless, the following year the *Hamburg* did call in China. See Chapter V, *infra*.

Nine-Power Agreement of Washington relating to the principles and policies to be pursued toward China evoked a strong reaction from both the officialdom in Peking and the adherents of the Nationalist movement in the south.⁷¹ Although the dispute between German and Peking was satisfactorily settled in the spring of 1926, the Canton Government continued to be dissatisfied. Because no official relations existed with the southern government, the dispute between the Nationalists (and their communist supporters) and Germany was carried on mainly outside diplomatic channels. Chinese students in Germany, who strongly supported the Kuomintang, agitated for the retraction of Germany's adherence. They received diplomatic support from the Soviet Union in line with that power's close relations with the Kuomintang. The joint pressure was intended to force Berlin to recognize the Southern regime as the legal government of China and, in the process, to separate Germany from the other powers in China.⁷²

The question as to whether to recognize the Nationalist regime well illustrates the dilemma facing German policy in China. On the one hand, correct and friendly relations with the Chinese was a prerequisite to the fulfillment of Germany's prime role in Asia - trade. On the other, questions involving revision of the Versailles settlement dictated maintenance of good relations with certain powers, particularly Britain,

⁷¹German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty is fully discussed in Chapter III, *infra*.

⁷²See, for example, *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik: Serie B, 1925-1933* [hereafter cited as *ADAP, B*], III (Göttingen, 1968), Memo Michelsen, Document No. 240. The Communist *Reichstag* delegation also introduced an Interpellation in December 1926 criticizing the adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty and demanding the recognition of the Canton government. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeines*, I, esp. *Reichstag Präsident* to *RAM*, I.4804/26 (IV Chi 2548), December 9, 1926; Wallroth to Peking, Nos. 134 & 135 (e.o. IV Chi 2551), December 11, 1926.

which, as upholders of the Treaty system in China found themselves in conflict with the Nationalists and their Soviet Russian mentors.

During 1926, the problem became more acute. Chiang Kai-shek, the successor to Sun Yat-sen in the Kuomintang, finally launched the "Northern Expedition" in July 1926 in order to wrest control of the country from the northern warlords and provincial *tuchluns*. The campaign, financed and armed by the Soviet Union, proved surprisingly successful. Province after province fell under the Nationalist banner, and the foreign powers in China were faced with the problem of dealing with the rising strength of the Kuomintang.

Germany first began seriously to consider the problem in the autumn of 1926. In November, the German representative in Canton, Consul-General Crull, recommended to Berlin that Germany prepare to recognize the Nationalist Government in concert with or, if possible, prior to the Treaty Powers.⁷³ Crull argued in a subsequent report that the "red" complexion of the Nationalists was only skin-deep. In his opinion, the Soviet advisors and the Communist influence in the Kuomintang only existed as an expedient and by default - the west had rejected requests for assistance and the Chinese nationalist movement had turned inevitably to the one source available. Further, Russian activity for the moment was limited to the political sphere. A formal recognition of the Kuomintang would serve to limit the spread of Soviet influence - he mentioned particularly the desirability of excluding the Russians from the economic and industrialization plans of the southerners. Crull also predicted that Britain, in order to maintain her recently rewon position of leadership amongst the Treaty Powers in China-policy,

⁷³PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: Sld. Rep., VI, Boyé to AA, No. 3723 (IV Chi 2587), November 26, 1926.

would proceed independently in the recognition question when necessary.⁷⁴

The German Minister in Peking, Boyé, disagreed with the assessment of the Consul-General in the south. He was cool toward the Nationalist movement and, as will be seen,⁷⁵ more concerned with reacquiring a place in the ranks of the Treaty Powers for Germany than with accumulating good will amongst the Chinese. He did not believe that a "premature" recognition would weigh strongly enough with the Nationalists to compensate for the inevitable alienation of the Treaty Powers and the Peking regime. In his view, the Chinese had not treated Germany with any more respect than they did other powers despite Germany's agreement to give up extraterritoriality and special privileges. Germany should wait for the Treaty Powers to act and then proceed cautiously. He observed that most Germans in China lived in the Foreign Concessions and thus voluntarily or involuntarily relied on the protection of "imperialist" weapons. Anyway, he concluded, the question at present was not acute - the Nationalists were far from consolidating control of the country.⁷⁶ He did agree however that Germany should not be left behind in the recognition question if the powers should decide

⁷⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, II, Memo Michelsen (zu IV Chi 356), February 15, 1927. See also *ibid.*, Boyé to AA, No 245 (IV Chi 356), Anlage 1 (Crull, Canton to Peking Legation, J. No. B. 869, December 29, 1926), January 20, 1927. Consul-General Crull argued that the advantages Germany had won as a result of separating herself from the Treaty Powers in the 1921 Sino-German Treaty would be jeopardized when the other powers also relinquished their special rights. Germany, in order once more to gain a step, should therefore recognize the Nationalist Government *before* any other Treaty Power.

⁷⁵See Chapter III, *infra*.

⁷⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: *Süd. Rep.*, VI, Boyé to AA, No. 3723 (IV Chi 2587), November 26, 1926.

to act; she must be prepared to follow suit as quickly as possible.⁷⁷

Boyé's views found favor in the Foreign Ministry. The Wilhelmstrasse was not prepared to move in anticipation of the other western powers. For one thing, it was well recognized that the Nationalists were interested in recognition not as a regional government but as the *de jure* Government of China. Such an act would obviously entail withdrawal of recognition from Peking and would thereby be damaging to the extensive German business interests in the north and in provinces allied to the Peking regime. Further, independent recognition would signal a forward step by Germany in China policy and could lead to difficulty with the Treaty Powers. For the present, then, Germany would follow a policy of "watchful waiting."⁷⁸

Undoubtedly, of predominant importance to the German Foreign Ministry in its assessment of the problem was the danger of a sharpening of Anglo-Russian hostility over the Canton question. To maintain cordial relations with both powers was a prerequisite of Germany's over-all foreign policy, and to have taken any initiative would likely have created friction with one or the other power. Germany therefore maintained a neutral attitude, but was prepared to grant recognition simultaneous with the Treaty Powers.⁷⁹

⁷⁷PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 142 (IV Chi 2659), December 13, 1926; ADAP, B, III, Doc. No. 245.

⁷⁸Phrase in English in original. PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, AA to Missions other than Peking (e.o. IV Chi 2697), January 3, 1927.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, Schubert to Legation Peking, No. 142 (zu IV Chi 2629, 2630, 2640, 2641), December 24, 1926; ADAP, B, III, Doc. No. 251; RM, 37 Chi, I, AA to Embassy London, No. 739 (zu IV Chi 2569), December 14, 1926. For the attitudes of the Treaty Powers, see Akira Iriye, *After Imperialism: The Search for a New Order in the Far East, 1921-1931* (New York, 1969, orig. 1965), Chapter V, "Diplomacy of the Northern Expedition, 1926-1927," 89-122.

The Soviet Union especially was concerned about what policy Germany would adopt toward the events in South China. The Nationalist advance up the Yangtze valley was continuing and concern existed in Moscow that Britain was attempting to assemble a coalition of powers to defend the International Settlement at Shanghai and perhaps intervene against the Nationalist armies. Soviet Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs Litvinov in January 1927 raised the question of Germany's attitude in a conversation with the German Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Brockdorff-Rantzau. Litvinov hinted that any German intervention in the quarrels in China would have undesirable repercussions for German-Russian relations.⁸⁰ In Berlin, Nikolai Krestinski, the Russian Ambassador, expressed the same warning to Foreign Minister Stresemann.⁸¹

The Wilhelmstrasse hastened to inform Moscow that Germany was not contemplating adhering to any power constellation in China. Germany would maintain her customary policy of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of China. The Russians were further assured, moreover, that German public opinion strongly supported the Canton Government in

⁸⁰PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Brockdorff-Rantzau to AA, no No., January 27, 1927. Although Shanghai was seized by a worker's insurrection prior to the arrival of the Nationalist armies on March 22 and no fighting took place within the city, tension ran high. The International and French Concessions were garrisoned by 30,000 foreign troops, nearly one per foreign inhabitant. Germany was the only great power (besides Russia) without troops or warships on the scene. See Isaacs, 147.

⁸¹PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Schubert to Moscow, no No., January 24, 1927. This information supports the argument of Lionel Kochan, *The Struggle for Germany* (Edinburgh, 1963), 51-53, although he concentrates his attention on the European maneuvers of Russia directed at securing continued German friendship.

its program as the "standard bearers for China's national idea."⁸²

During the confused events of 1927, Germany continued in her neutral and reserved attitude. Civil war and brigandage continued in many areas of China, the northern warlords were not as yet subdued and, to add to the chaos, the Nationalist movement split into opposing camps. The Nationalist Government had established its headquarters in Wuhan on January 1, 1927. Here left-wing elements dominated. Once Shanghai fell into the hands of the Nationalist armies under Chiang Kai-shek, in March 1927, he began increasingly to free himself from Soviet and communist influence. First, he effected his notorious agreement with the business community of Shanghai and the secret societies and then proceeded to move against the workers' organizations and union which had been instrumental in the fall of the city. The suppression of the workers and the massacre of the communist leaders in April was quickly followed by Chiang's establishment of his own National Government in Nanking. The revolutionary movement was thereby fragmented.

The adherence of warlord Feng Yü-hsiang to Chiang's camp tipped the scales in favor of the rightists. The Wuhan Nationalists, responding to the new power constellation, also swung to the right and expelled the Chinese Communists from the Kuomintang. Purges and executions followed, and the Soviet advisors departed China. The Chinese Communists

⁸²*Ibid.*, Schubert to Moscow, [No. 99] (zu IV Chi 206), January 26, 1927; PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, I, Wallroth to Peking (zu IV Chi 259), February 1, 1927. The German press generally was favorable to the Nationalist cause. See *ibid.*, II, Wallroth to Embassy London, No. 93 (e.o. IV Chi 394), February 12, 1927; V, "Allgemeine Lage in China," (e.o. IV Chi 904), April 9, 1927. The Wilhelmstrasse's concern about being caught between Moscow and London during this period of sharpening confrontation is fully discussed in Harvey Leonard Dyck, *Weimar Germany & Soviet Russia, 1926-1933: A Study in Diplomatic Instability* (New York, 1966), 79-87.

attempted to fight back, but the numerous attempts, notably the "Autumn Harvest Uprisings" of August and the "Canton Commune" of December 1927, were easily and brutally suppressed.

Germany was not undisturbed by these events. However, now the benefits of being excluded from the ranks of the Treaty Powers began to appear. German nationals had generally been protected by the competent Chinese authorities, even during the "most agitated days" in Canton and Hankow.⁸³ The advantages of being of German nationality were now obvious, and, to avoid altering the privileged status, the Foreign Ministry cautioned its representatives in China not to become involved in situations where solidarity with nationals of Treaty Powers would be unavoidable. The danger to life and property was recognized, however, and although the German government could not contemplate "gun-boat" diplomacy, it was prepared to do everything possible to assist German nationals in China financially. In April, a large amount of money (1 Million RM) was placed at the disposal of the Peking Legation for use if necessary to assist German nationals in need.⁸⁴

Germany's carefully guarded neutral stance seemed threatened by the events in Peking of April 1927. Warlord Chang Tso-lin, current

⁸³*Ibid.*, IV, Schubert to Peking, No. 64 (IV Chi 837), April 4, 1927. As a matter of fact, German businessmen in the south had benefited considerably from the rise of the Nationalists. The boycott inaugurated against the Treaty Powers in June 1925 as a result of the Shanghai Incident had led to the falling of much of the French, English, and American import and export business into the hands of Germans. PA, Abt. IV, Po 25 Chi: *Deutschtum*, II, Peking Legation to AA, No. 2827 (IV Chi 2485), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Canton to Peking, J. No. 603, September 22, 1927), October 10, 1927.

⁸⁴PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Stresemann to Legation Peking, No. 71, April 6, 1927; Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, V, AA to Reichsfinanzministerium (zu IV Chi 915), April 11, 1927.

strong man in the northern camp, invaded the Foreign Legation quarter and seized a number of incriminating documents in the Soviet Embassy.⁸⁵ A Reuter report from Berlin widely circulated in the Chinese press indicated that the German Minister, Boyé, had approved the act. Other reports (United Press, Germania) however asserted that the German Minister's disapproval of the action was substantiated by the fact that the German Legation had offered protection to the Russian refugees and was transmitting telegrams for the Russian authorities to Moscow.⁸⁶

Boyé was concerned that the ostensibly pro-Russian attitude of the German press in dealing with events in China, which was endangering his position with the Diplomatic Body and Chang Tso-lin, could also lead to friction with the Treaty Powers.⁸⁷ Actually the German press was simply mirroring the balancing act Germany was attempting to follow with regard to China's domestic turmoil. In Germany, the Communist press was actually charging that the remainder of German papers carried only pro-English articles.⁸⁸

During these months the German Communists accused the government

⁸⁵ See C. Martin Wilbur and Julie Lien-ying How, eds., *Documents on Communism, Nationalism, and Soviet Advisers in China, 1918-1927: Papers Seized in the 1927 Peking Raid* (New York, 1956). The Foreign Ministry was disconcerted to learn that the Soviet Embassy in China had access to their diplomatic correspondence. A spy, working in the Chinese post office, intercepted consular reports sent to Peking either for Legation information or for transmission to Berlin. PA, Abt. IV, Po 3 adh.: *Politische Beziehungen zwischen fremden Staaten, China-Russland*, VI, Boyé to AA, No. 657 (IV Chi 894), n.d. [rec. May 8, 1928].

⁸⁶ PA, *Büro des Staatssekretärs, Ochi: Angelegenheiten des Fernen Ostens* [hereafter cited as *Bü St. S. Chi*], II, Boyé to AA, No. 127, April 12, 1927. This information was correct and stemmed from an indiscretion of a Deputy in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the *Reichstag*.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ PA, *Direktoren-Handakten, Wallroth - China, Japan, Siam*, XXXI, Schubert to Boyé, No. 90, April 14, 1927.

of following Britain's lead in a common imperialist policy toward the Chinese revolution, and these charges were aired in heated *Reichstag* debates on foreign policy during April 1927.⁸⁹ To elucidate publicly Germany's position, and in line with the Foreign Ministry's concern for the security of German nationals and firms in China,⁹⁰ Foreign Minister Stresemann granted an interview on April 29 to Mr. Kuh of the United Press. The tone was conciliatory toward the basic "national aspirations" of the Chinese people, yet cautious enough not to evoke any protests from the Treaty Powers. According to Stresemann, Germany was not directly involved in the current events in China because of her withdrawal from the "Unequal Treaties" in 1921. The German government, which pursued only trade and commerce in China, was solely interested in the restoration of peaceful conditions in order to pursue these ends. The German government was maintaining a "meticulous neutrality."⁹¹

The Minister to China, Boyé, was not however a very suitable representative for carrying out a policy of "meticulous neutrality." His sensitivity to the supposed slights he had to tolerate from the Chinese because of Germany's exclusion from the Treaty Powers,⁹² and his hostility to the Nationalists and their disregard of international treaties, are reflected in his proposals to the Wilhelmstrasse to act in a manner

⁸⁹ Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 105-106.

⁹⁰ See PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, IV, Stresemann to Boyé, No. 88 (e.o. IV Chi 982), April 12, 1927; *Blt St.S. Chi*, II, Schubert to Embassy London, No. 306 (e.o. IV Chi 1008), April 14, 1927; and, for Stresemann's attitude toward the internal Chinese events, see his Memo of April 7, 1927 in Gustav Stresemann, *Vermächtnis: Der Nachlass in Drei Bänden*, ed. by Henry Bernhard (Berlin, 1932-1933), III, 122-24.

⁹¹ PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, VI, Interview Stresemann with Kuh (e.o. IV Chi 1207), April 29, 1927.

⁹² On Boyé's attitude during the 1925-1926 crisis over German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty, see Chapter III, *infra*.

more suiting to Germany's great power status.

For example, toward the end of July, 1927 the Nanking government announced that beginning September 1 surtaxes ranging from 7 per cent to 57 per cent would be levied on all foreign goods entering China. Boyé proposed that if, as was likely, the Treaty Powers refused to pay the increase, Germany should follow suit. He then would request international naval protection for German vessels. He saw no other way to avoid placing German business interests in a subordinate position to those of the Treaty Powers. The "audacity and unreasonableness" of the Chinese in this affair, as in so many others, had to be opposed.⁹³

Berlin rejected Boyé's suggestion. Not only would the Chinese and the Soviet Union be alienated, but the Treaty Powers henceforth could expect German participation on their side. It would mean the abandonment of German neutrality. Boyé was instructed instead to have the Consulate-General in Shanghai protest to the Nanking government that the increased levy was incompatible with the "reciprocity" contained in the 1921 Treaty, and to request suspension of the provision toward Germany until the dispute was settled with the Treaty Powers. If this could not be attained, the German shipping lines would be advised to pay the tariff under protest.⁹⁴

Despite the somewhat belligerent attitude of her Minister in Peking, throughout 1927 Germany managed to pursue a middle course in

⁹³PA, *Handakten, Ha Pol.: Ritter - China*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 202, July 26, 1927. On Nanking's decision to enforce tariff autonomy see Pollard, 333-35.

⁹⁴PA, *Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeines*, Schubert to Boyé, No. 134 (zu IV Chi 1810), July 28, 1927; BA, R 43I/56, AA to *Staatssekretär in der Reichskanzlei* (RK 6145/27), July 28, 1927. The dispute did not come to a head. Following the resignation of Chiang Kai-shek and his

China. The split between the left and right Kuomintang was mended by the end of the year, and as part of the bargain all relations between the Soviet Union and the Nationalist Government, now reestablished in Nanking, were formally severed. Because of the closure of Russian consulates in Kuomintang-controlled territory, Germany was requested by Moscow to assume the protection of Soviet citizens and interests in the south.⁹⁵ Germany, since no diplomatic relations yet existed with the Nationalists, was not able to provide formal diplomatic protection, but did agree to look after Soviet interests in the areas controlled by the Kuomintang within practical capability.⁹⁶ The Chinese were so informed,⁹⁷ and it is a mark of the respect Germany had acquired by her "meticulous neutrality" that no protests were forthcoming either from Peking or Nanking. Perhaps, as the Wilhelmstrasse hoped, the Chinese were well aware that Germany was not in a position to refuse the Soviet request, and that her assumption of protection of Soviet citizens and property was simply an international "courtesy."⁹⁸ German policy

associates in August, the Nanking regime did not feel strong enough to enforce the new regulations and they were "suspended temporarily." See Pollard, 335.

⁹⁵ *PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Schubert to Legation Peking, No. 158, December 17, 1927; Schubert to Moscow, no No., December 19, 1927.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid., Stresemann to Shanghai, No. 50 (IV Chi A 2799), December 20, 1927.*

⁹⁷ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeines, Memo Trautmann (zu IV Chi 2830), December 21, 1927.*

⁹⁸ *PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Schubert to Peking, No. 158, December 17, 1927. See also PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, IV, Memo ("Die politische Entwicklung in China [bis Ende 1927]"), (IV Chi 138), January 25, 1928. This was sent to all diplomatic posts with the exception of Peking. The British Ambassador in Berlin, Sir Ronald Lindsay, also recognized the impartiality of Germany's action, opining that to refuse the Russians would have "signified a highly unfriendly act." *PA, BU St. S. Chi, IV, Memo, December 20, 1927.**

had not altered - this act did not signify any choosing of sides.

In the spring of 1928, the reunited Kuomintang forces and those of their warlord allies resumed the campaign to overthrow the *tuchün* government at Peking. By June, although Chiang Kai-shek's armies had suffered reverses in Shantung at the hands of the Japanese, his ally, Yen Hsi-shan, warlord of Shansi Province, had taken the old northern capital. Chang Tso-lin retreated to his stronghold in Manchuria, but the last of the *tuchün* rulers of China was assassinated by his Japanese mentors en route. This marked the end of the Northern Expedition and the triumph of the Kuomintang. All China south of the Great Wall was now in the nominal control of the Nationalists, and the Treaty Powers were faced with the question of *de jure* recognition.

Germany continued to maintain her reserved attitude toward the domestic events in China, avoiding any initiative. However, in response to a collective telegram sent by Nanking in June 1928 to all Chinese Legations, the Chinese *chargé d'affaires* in Berlin hoisted the KMT flag over the Legation building, signifying his adherence to the Nationalist cause. This created a legal problem of some complexity for the German Foreign Ministry. The accredited Minister, Wei, had returned to China on leave, the Wilhelmstrasse was not informed officially of any change in status of the Legation, and, of course, Germany did not recognize the Nationalist government.⁹⁹ It was finally decided to ignore the situation for the time being, and to await the reactions of the other great powers.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi; *China-Deutschland*, V, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 1198), June 16, 1928.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, Schubert to Peking, No. 53; Schubert to Tokyo, No. 62; Schubert to London, No. 295; Schubert to Washington, No. 204; Schubert to Paris, No. 540; Schubert to Rome, No. 184; Schubert to Moscow, No. 313, June 17, 1928.

Simultaneous with this event, two high-ranking Chinese Nationalist delegations were in Berlin. Chiang Kai-shek had dispatched a "study mission" headed by Lieutenant-General Chen Yi ostensibly to consider the capabilities of German industry,¹⁰¹ but whose actual purpose was to secure the assistance of German military advisors.¹⁰² The second mission, also designated a "study mission," was headed by Sun Fo, the son of Sun Yat-sen and until recently Finance Minister in the Nanking government. Sun Fo was received in the Foreign Ministry on June 7, but did not formally raise the question of German recognition at this time.¹⁰³

The following month Sun Fo discussed the question of German-Chinese economic cooperation with Chancellor Müller. He had already been in touch with German industrial circles, notably the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie*. He asserted that the German industrialists were cautious about committing themselves to any projects prior to German recognition of the Nationalist regime or official German government support for Sino-German cooperation in the modernization of China. Sun pointed out that the friendly relations existing between the two countries, in contrast to those between China and the Treaty Powers,

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*, letter of Chiang Kai-shek to Stresemann (IV Chi 1240), March 10, 1928; Memo Dirksen (e.o. IV Chi 1046), May 25, 1928; Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 374 (IV Chi 690), March 15, 1928.

¹⁰²This mission was accompanied by Colonel Max Bauer, the founder of the German military advisory group in China, and is discussed fully in Chapter VI, *infra*.

¹⁰³PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, IV, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 1127), June 6, 1927; *Ibid.*, V, Brockdorff-Rantzau to AA, No. 622 (IV Chi 1157), June 10, 1928; Köpke to Embassy Moscow, No. 294 (zu IV Chi 1159), June 11, 1928.

made close economic and political cooperation between Germany both possible and logical. As a matter of fact, he argued, no difficulties should stand in the way of an immediate recognition of the Nanking regime, a move which would be welcomed both as a sign of friendship and as proof that China henceforth could rely upon German assistance. In any event, recognition was a mere formality because the Nanking government already had unified China and was now the only government in the country, a slightly misleading observation.

Müller replied that Germany was prepared in principle to grant formal recognition to Nanking now that it was the *de facto* ruler of China, but that it was generally customary to wait a decent interval until the government stabilized. Germany would follow suit in granting recognition as soon as the other powers did so. The Chancellor assured Sun that once Stresemann had recuperated from his illness and returned to work the question would be considered. Certainly the German government was willing and eager to cooperate in any technical and industrialization plans the Chinese might suggest, although only a small amount of German capital would be involved.¹⁰⁴

Undoubtedly the Nationalist Government would eagerly have welcomed a *de jure* recognition by Germany. However, events soon made such an act superfluous. The United States had resolved on June 15, 1928 to deal with the Nationalists on a *de facto* basis and enter into negotiations on conclusion of a new tariff treaty.¹⁰⁵ The negotiations

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 1380), July 12, 1928. See also BA, R43I/56, Dirksen to Reichskanzlei, RK 5449 (IV Chi 1355), July 10, 1928. The economic aspects of Sun's mission are discussed in Chapter X, *infra*.

¹⁰⁵Borg, 386-417.

proceeded with exceptional speed, and the new tariff agreement was signed by the United States and China on July 25, 1928. In effect, although formal recognition had not been touched upon, the treaty came to be regarded as *de jure* U. S. recognition of the Nationalist Government in Nanking.

At this juncture, Germany was fortunate to have an experienced and capable negotiator on the spot. Herbert von Borch, who had been serving in the Tokyo Embassy, was transferred to Peking in April 1928¹⁰⁶ to replace Boyé who returned to Germany on leave. Upon news of the U.S. treaty with China,¹⁰⁷ Berlin empowered Borch to open discussions with the Nanking Government on conclusion of a tariff Treaty.¹⁰⁸ The time seemed opportune to the Wilhelmstrasse to attain equal treatment with the other foreign powers in China. Borch's instructions were to attain equal treatment with the other powers in customs regulations, trade, navigation, and right of movement in the interior. If possible, he was to strive to attain most-favored nation status in the sphere of domestic jurisdiction over foreigners. Naturally extraterritoriality would not be considered.¹⁰⁹

The necessity of concluding a new tariff treaty at this time revolved around the fact that the Nationalists had proclaimed the introduction of an autonomous customs tariff to go into effect on February 1, 1929. Under the terms of the Sino-German Treaty of 1921,

¹⁰⁶BA, *Nachlass Wilhelm Solf*, No. 77, 174-75, Borch to Solf, July 12, 1928.

¹⁰⁷PA, *Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, V, Borch to AA, No. 108 (IV Chi 1473), July 26, 1928.

¹⁰⁸PA, *RM, 37 Chi*, I, Schubert to Shanghai, No. 26 (zu IV Chi 1473), July 28, 1928.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*

Germany's equivalent of most-favored nation status would thus end on that date. In the negotiations, one fact predominated. A resumption of reciprocal most-favored nation statuses would benefit Germany far more than China. German imports from China were predominantly raw materials and food products upon which a low customs rate applied, while her exports to China consisted overwhelmingly of manufactured products. The reason why China proved willing to concede this financial advantage to Germany without a reciprocal German concession was the great interest of the Nationalist Government in establishing formal relations with another great power besides the United States.¹¹⁰

The negotiations proceeded smoothly,¹¹¹ and on August 17, 1928 a Treaty of Commerce was signed at Nanking.¹¹² Article 1 provided for complete reciprocity¹¹³ in trade relations between the two countries. Both parties received most-favored nation status¹¹⁴ within the territories of the other, although details on navigation and fixed tariff rates were not worked out. Article II stated that negotiations for the conclusion of a detailed treaty of commerce and navigation would be entered into as

¹¹⁰PA, *Handakten, Ha Pol.: Ritter - China*, I, Memo Michelsen, no No., December 11, 1928.

¹¹¹The Chinese negotiator was the current Nationalist Foreign Minister, Cheng-t'ing (C.T.) Thomas Wang. Wang also had been Foreign Minister of the Peking regime during the dispute between China and Germany over the latter's attempted adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty on the "Open Door." See Chapter III, *infra*. Details on the negotiations can be found in PA, *Direktoren-Handakten, Handakten Trautmann, China*.

¹¹²The site was significant to the Chinese as this was the first treaty signed in the new capital. PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, IV, Borch to AA, No. 35, August 11, 1928.

¹¹³On Germany's initiative, the term "reciprocity" was omitted and "absolute equality of treatment in customs matters" was substituted. *Ibid.*, Schubert to Shanghai, No. 33, August 13, 1928.

¹¹⁴With a view to Chinese sensibilities, this phrase also was omitted. *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 113, August 17, 1928.

soon as possible.¹¹⁵

The significance of this agreement lay not so much in the trade agreement,¹¹⁶ although this was important to Germany, as in the successful normalization of Berlin's relations with the Nationalist Government without incurring the hostility of the Treaty Powers.¹¹⁷

The Treaty was ratified (after some difficulty on the Chinese side) early in the new year (January 9, 1929) and came into effect on January 21, 1929. The Sino-German Treaty thereby became the first international agreement concluded by Nanking to come into effect, a fact of some importance.¹¹⁸ Without further ado, the agreement was treated by both parties as establishing *de jure* relations, and formal representatives were soon thereafter exchanged. On February 13, 1929, Chiang Tso-ping (a personal confidant of Chiang Kai-shek) presented his credentials to President von Hindenburg. Borch became the first German Minister to the Nationalist Government, handing over his credentials on June 8, 1929.¹¹⁹ Even prior to these events, the German government

¹¹⁵ *Reichsgesetzblatt* 1928, II, 646; League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, XCI (1929), No. 2057, "Germany and China: Treaty of Commerce," August 17, 1928, 97-100.

¹¹⁶ The negotiations and discussions dragged on for the next few years without anything concrete emerging. By 1930, the negotiations petered out and the Chinese Foreign Minister, C. T. Wang, showed no interest in resuming discussions. The negotiations and internal German consideration of draft treaties can be followed in detail in *PA*, *Direktoren-Handakten*, *Handakten Trautmann, China*; *BA*, R2/24580.

¹¹⁷ Japan in particular was concerned as to whether or not the Treaty constituted German recognition of the Nanking government. See *PA*, *Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, V, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Jap 741), August 25, 1928; *Bll St.S.Chi*, I, Memo Michelsen, October 12, 1928.

¹¹⁸ The Senate of the United States only ratified the Tariff Treaty with China on February 13, 1929. Borg, 406.

¹¹⁹ *PA*, *Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: Vertretungen in China*, IV, Borch to AA, No. 1827, June 8, 1929.

had been the first to establish direct contacts with the Nationalist Government in Nanking, using Counsellor of Legation Wagner as liason man between the Nationalists and the German Legation in Peiping.¹²⁰

Minister von Borch visited the new capital immediately after the signing of the Treaty. He was greeted warmly and treated with extraordinary friendship, leading him to the conclusion that Germany had stolen a step on the other powers and would surely reap special benefits in the field of trade and commerce as a result of the impression made upon the Nationalist Chinese by Germany's recognition.¹²¹

His expectations were correct. By her exemplary neutrality during the period of travail for the Chinese Nationalist Revolution (with the exception of the Washington Agreement blunder) Germany indeed had won first place in the sentiments of the right-wing Kuomintang.¹²²

¹²⁰*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 1822, June 6, 1929.

¹²¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, V, Borch to AA, No. 2149 (IV Chi 1930), August 30, 1929.

¹²²Nanking's trust in Germany's friendship was soon demonstrated. On July 17, 1929, as the result of conflict over the Chinese Eastern Railway precipitated by the Nationalists, the Soviet Union recalled its diplomatic and consular personnel from China and expelled from Soviet territory all Chinese representatives. The same day Moscow requested that Germany assume diplomatic protection of Soviet interests in China. The following day the Nationalist Chinese also requested German protection of China's interests in Russia. Germany accepted both tasks. During the next few months, numerous attempts to mediate the conflict were made by the great powers, notably the United States. However, in September Chinese Foreign Minister C. T. Wang asked Berlin to help settle the conflict, and added that, because "Germany was an especially good friend," he would welcome German mediation. See especially PA, Bl St. S. Ochiru: *Russisch-chinesischer Konflikt wegen der Mandschurischen Ostbahn*, I, Dirksen to AA, No. 509, July 18, 1929; Schubert to German Legation Peitaiho, July 18, 1929; Memo Schubert (e.o. IV Chi 1490) (re conversation with Chinese Legation Counsellor Liang), July 18, 1929; RM, 37 Chi, II, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 202, September 23, 1929. The German diplomatic efforts until the Khabarovsk Protocol of December 22, 1929 can be followed in detail in PA, Bl St. S. Ochiru: *Russisch-chinesischer Konflikt*, I-V; Abteilung Geheimakten 1920-1936

Extensive industrial and commercial activity developed at once between the two countries, vindicating the policy the Wilhelmstrasse had been pursuing in China. However, much to the discomfort of Berlin, hand in hand with increased trade went the already growing involvement of German military men in China, first as private advisors but later as semi-official representatives of another German government agency - the *Reichswehrministerium*.

[hereafter cited as *Abt. Geh. Akt.*], *Länder IV - Russland: Russisch-Chinesischer Konflikt*, I-V. See also the extremely detailed study (without benefit of use of the German documents) in Peter S. H. Tang, *Russian and Soviet Policy in Manchuria and Outer Mongolia, 1911-1931* (Durham, North Carolina, 1959), 199-267; and Dyck, 156ff.

CHAPTER III

GERMANY AND THE "WASHINGTON SYSTEM": THE 1926 DISPUTE OVER GERMANY'S DECISION TO ADHERE TO THE NINE-POWER TREATY

On only one occasion during the 1920's did German diplomacy toward China seriously blunder, namely in connection with the question of Germany's proposed adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty on the "Open Door." The resulting temporary strain in German-Chinese relations stemmed primarily from Berlin's failure to appreciate the magnitude of China's determination to abolish the old order of international relations in the Far East and regain her national sovereignty. Desirous of improving Germany's standing with the Treaty Powers, especially Great Britain and the United States, the Wilhelmstrasse adopted a policy which proved highly offensive to the Chinese.

It is worth considering this story in some detail not only to outline the major shift in China's attitude which foreshadowed the breakdown of the post-1922 multilateral framework of international relations in the Far East,¹ but also to illustrate the complexities facing Germany in pursuing a foreign policy with China. Further, the crisis helps clarify the interconnection of German policy in the Far East with that followed in the European context; not only did complications arise with the Chinese and the Treaty Powers,

¹Iriye, *After Imperialism*, is the most satisfactory interpretive study of post-World War I Far Eastern international relations.

but repercussions followed in Soviet-German relations and domestic controversy ensued.

In Germany's treaty with China of 1921, the latter's demand of reestablishing relations on the principles of full equality and reciprocity was accepted, Germany thereby relinquishing extraterritoriality and all other rights in China previously enjoyed as a member of the western camp. Although the Wilhelmstrasse originally assumed that Germany would benefit from her concessions,² and that other powers soon would willingly or unwillingly follow suit in giving up special rights, such did not prove to be the case. China's internal strife delayed any meaningful reform of the "Unequal Treaty" system. Germany thus found herself excluded from the multilateral deliberations of the Treaty Powers (except for formal occasions) without her situation being ameliorated by the supposedly "friendly" relations established with China. In this situation, Germany's special status became irritating and served ultimately to focus Berlin's dissatisfaction on the disadvantages deriving from her diplomatic isolation in the Far East.

As early as 1923, the German Minister to Peking, Boyé, began to stress drawbacks which ensued from having to deal with China unilaterally, observing that even powers like Great Britain and the United States found it beneficial to make their diplomatic initiatives collectively in joint

²In this connection, it is not unimportant to record that although Berlin believed the Chinese court system and the legal profession's capability and morality to be sadly lacking, diplomatic representatives later were instructed to minimize difficulties and emphasize improvements in China's exercise of judicial sovereignty over German nationals. This policy was adopted in the realization that since Germany never could regain extraterritoriality, her interests would best be served if all other powers also lost their judicial rights. See *PA, Bll St.S. Chi*, I, circular of State Secretary von Schubert (IV Chi 2404), November 30, 1926; *ADAP, B*, III, Doc. No. 239.

notes delivered by the Peking Diplomatic Body. It was particularly galling that Germany's voice went unheard in such a basic matter as the determining of the Chinese Customs Tariff, not because Germany had any intrinsic interest in this matter but because of the implications non-participation had for Germany's diplomatic prestige.³ The previous year a conference on revision of the tariff rates⁴ had been attended by representatives from the highest level of China's civil service and all foreign Ministers with the sole exception of the German and Cuban representatives. Not only was such discrimination detrimental to Germany's status in the diplomatic community, but the fact that after four years of peace Germany was still regarded as an "outsider" lowered her stature with the Chinese. Even though Germany had accommodated China in the 1921 Sino-German Treaty, seemingly the Chinese did not reciprocate Germany's friendly attitude and, according to Boyé, interpreted her isolation as a sign of military and political impotence.⁵

Since the end of the First World War, a new Far Eastern international framework was taking shape that could eventually end German diplomatic isolation. At the Washington Conference of 1921-1922, an attempt had been made to reestablish order and stability in the Far East after the tumultuous events of World War I, particularly in view of the

³A later remark clearly expressed the Wilhelmstrasse's attitude toward such intangibles: "In the East everything revolves around the non-loss of face." PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Die Konferenz in Washington*, I, private letter Schubert to Herr von Winterfeld [drafted by Trautmann] (e.o. IV Chi 1579), August 7, 1925.

⁴See Pollard, 249-50.

⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Konferenz*, I, Boyé to AA, K. No. 45 (IVb Chi 607), January 27, 1923. See also *ibid.*, Boyé to AA, K. No. 239 (IVb Chi 1741), June 18, 1923.

vastly increased influence of Japan both in the Pacific and on the mainland. One of the agreements approved during the course of the conference was the Nine-Power Treaty⁶ which gave multilateral codification (with the significant addition of China as a signator) to the long-held policy of the United States of maintaining the "Open Door" in China. But even more significant, it represented the hope of the United States that a new framework of multilateral agreements could replace the previous system of maintaining equilibrium on the basis of a balance of power and, ultimately, put an end to the old "Unequal Treaty" system.⁷

One of the weaknesses of the new international system contemplated at Washington was the exclusion of Germany⁸ and Russia, the international pariahs at the time of the 1921 Conference, thereby permitting the existence of parallel bilateral relationships in the Far East. In Berlin's view, the calculated ostracization of Germany even after the 1921 Sino-German Treaty had to be attributed solely to the passions aroused in the late war; isolation did not stem from a fundamental conflict of policies. The abstract principles set forth in the Nine-Power Treaty coincided with

⁶There were actually two "Nine-Power" agreements concluded during the Washington Conference. The one referred to in the text and generally termed the "Nine-Power Treaty" concerned principles and policies to be pursued toward China, the other made some new provisions for determining the Chinese Customs Tariff.

⁷Iriye, 14-18.

⁸Even in 1922 the United States had suggested the participation of Germany in the Nine-Power framework, but England and France objected to Germany's reappearance as an equal so soon after Versailles. See Heinrich Betz, "Der Machtkampf im Fernen Osten; Das Neunmächteabkommen von 1922 und seine historisch-politische Bedeutung." *Berliner Monatshefte*, XVII (Aug., 1939), 716. (Before the war Betz had been Consul at Tsinan, and after the war was Consul-General at Tientsin until 1936.) In March 1922, the U.S. transmitted to China a list of prospective states to be invited to the Nine-Power Treaty in which Germany was included. See *PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 10 (IV Chi 98)*, January 14, 1926.

the policy Germany pursued in rebuilding her commercial position in China. When the Nine-Power Treaty referred to respecting the "sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China," it reproduced principles of conduct already accepted in the 1921 Sino-German Treaty and hence in the Wilhelmstrasse was regarded as compatible with German policy.⁹

During 1923, Boyé discussed the subject with his counterpart from the United States, Jacob Gould Schurman, who was sympathetic to Germany's desire to rehabilitate herself and at the same time interested in strengthening the cooperative framework postulated at Washington. Although Schurman did transmit a memorandum prepared by Boyé at his request on the relationship between German policy and that laid down in the Washington Agreements to United States Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes and further discussions in Peking took place,¹⁰ as Boyé fully expected nothing materialized at this time. China's internal difficulties had not been solved, indeed had intensified, and the Washington formulas had been predicated on China's meeting her obligations prior to the reform of the system. In this situation, the Treaty Powers remained passive, waiting for the Chinese to restore order to their own affairs.¹¹

⁹*PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, I, Boyé to AA, K. No 45 (IVb Chi 607), January 27, 1923. It should be observed that in 1923 Germany was not prepared to adhere to individual fragments of the Washington system nor to take formal diplomatic initiatives to obtain an invitation for fear of refusal.*

¹⁰*Ibid., Anlage 2; see also ibid., State Secretary Maltzan to Legation Peking, no No. (zu IVb Chi 607), April 9, 1923; Boyé to AA, K. No 239 (IVb Chi 1741), June 18, 1923. The German willingness to adhere to the 1919 China Arms Embargo also was linked to a desire to improve Germany's diplomatic status in the Far East. See Chapter IV, *infra*.*

¹¹*Iriye, 25-33.*

One reason why the topic was brought up in this year by Germany was the inevitable reappearance of Russia on the Far Eastern international scene. When this should occur it was expected that Germany's isolated position would be ameliorated: if she was refused admittance into the Washington framework, the Russian card could be played, similarly as at Rapallo, to aid Germany in gaining her objectives, a game the Treaty Powers could hardly object to since they had forced it on Germany by their continued ostracization.¹²

The game did not materialize. It is true that after Russia reestablished relations with China in 1924, warm relations initially existed between Soviet Ambassador L. M. Karakhan and Boyé.¹³ On the Soviet side it was only natural, given the hostility of the Treaty Powers and the generally friendly relations with Germany in Europe, that Boyé's assistance should be solicited, and it was likewise natural, given Boyé's expectation that Russia's return to China would increase German diplomatic leverage, that such help would be forthcoming. At the start, amicable relations existed between the two envoys.¹⁴

From the spring of 1924, the German and Soviet representatives continued to cooperate in matters of formal significance. For example,

¹²PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, I, Boyé to AA, No. 45 (IVb Chi 607), January 27, 1923.

¹³Boyé had played an active mediation role in the negotiations leading to the conclusion of a Sino-Soviet Treaty of recognition on May 31, 1924. PA, Abt. IV, Po 3 adh.: China-Russland, II, Boyé to AA, B. No. 1679 (IV Chi 1780), June 7, 1924.

¹⁴PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, no No., July 18, 1924. On Russian policy toward China in this period see Whiting, 208-35; and David J. Dallin, *The Rise of Russia in Asia* (New Haven, 1949), 180ff.

although the Russian Ambassador was senior according to the protocol of the Diplomatic Body, Karakhan initially was not accepted as such by the representatives of the Treaty Powers, and again he turned to Germany for assistance in overcoming the problem. Nikolai Krestinski, the Russian Ambassador in Berlin, requested Stresemann in January 1925 to have his representative in China assist in easing Karakhan's situation. Perhaps Boyé could take an initiative with the Diplomatic Body?¹⁵

By this time however Boyé had begun to suspect that Russia aimed at a more formal coordination of policy in China than was practical. He had come to the conclusion that the establishment of closer relations with the Soviet Union would endanger Germany's own precarious diplomatic position; Russia's formal relations with the Peking regime and her ongoing negotiations on outstanding treaty issues were secondary to her main aim in China - the support given to the Nationalists and Communists in their anti-foreign agitation in the south, agitation directed against the Treaty Powers and in particular Great Britain. This made Russia a potentially dangerous associate not only vis-à-vis the Treaty Powers but also with the Peking warlord government; hence no close ties could be established.¹⁶

During 1925 an alternative to cooperation with Russia and to continued German diplomatic isolation began to take form. Kuomintang and

¹⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: *Vertretungen in China*, III, Memo Stresemann, no No., January 17, 1925.

¹⁶Notwithstanding Boyé's cautious attitude, he was instrumental in the official conciliation. Acting "inconspicuously" through go-betweens, he promoted Karakhan's acceptance as Dean of the Diplomatic Body on April 21, 1925, and received warm thanks for his assistance. PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, no No., January 27, 1925; Boyé to AA, No. 18. April 22, 1925; Boyé to AA, no No., July 18, 1925; FRUS 1925, I, 636-41, (see esp. *chargé d'affaires* in Peking to Kellogg, No. 161, April 25, 1925).

communist agitation coupled with labor unrest culminated in the Shanghai Incident of May 30, 1925,¹⁷ in turn touching off the nationwide anti-foreign movement that prepared the way for the ultimate triumph of the Nationalists. In this atmosphere, popular outrage was such that no government, including the one presently controlling Peking, could afford to ignore the national feeling. Demands for a return of China's sovereignty, for an end to the "Unequal Treaties," now went far beyond the schedule contemplated at Washington. It was to be expected that an international conference would have to meet to deal with China's newfound militancy.

The Peking government, taking advantage of the climate of opinion and hoping to undercut the radicals' demands and perpetuate its own power, in June 1925 demanded the implementation of the promises made at Washington.¹⁸ While the Treaty Powers struggled to articulate a coordinated policy,¹⁹ Peking followed up its first initiative by issuing in August an invitation to the Washington Powers to participate in a special tariff conference to be convened in Peking on October 26, 1925. Such a conference was mandatory under the terms of the Nine-Power Agreement relating to the Chinese Customs Tariff which, owing to a major dispute between France and China known as the "gold franc" dispute,²⁰ had only recently been ratified by the former thereby bringing the general body of the Washington Agreements relating to China into effect on August

¹⁷ Isaacs, 69-73. Chow Tse-tung, 5ff.

¹⁸ Iriye, 62; Pollard, 266-70.

¹⁹ Iriye, 63-69.

²⁰ For a discussion of the "gold franc" dispute and its consequences, see Morse and MacNair, II, 832ff.; Pollard, 259-66.

5, 1925.

The Wilhelmstrasse was interested in securing an invitation to the tariff conference.²¹ Although Germany already had recognized China's tariff autonomy in the 1921 Sino-German Treaty and in return received the equivalent of most-favored nation treatment for German imports to China, this privilege would last only until China regained general customs autonomy - a matter to which the conference would direct its attention. Furthermore, Berlin believed that German participation in the discussions would enhance Germany's prestige and mark the end of her uncomfortable isolation.

Yet Germany was not able to overtly publicize her interest in attending the conference. On the one hand, she might find herself caught between the Treaty Powers and the Soviet Union whose participation the former would not tolerate, and, on the other, she might raise suspicions with the Chinese about possible ulterior motives, i.e., that Germany wished to regain Treaty Power status. Any impression of desiring to stand with China's "oppressors" had to be eschewed.²²

Nevertheless, some cautious steps were taken. In Peking, Boyé already had made it clear to the Chinese that German participation would work in China's interest.²³ In Berlin, the Wilhelmstrasse planted an article on August 11, 1925 in the *Hamburg Fremden-Blatt* for the benefit

²¹Iriye, 70, misinterprets German policy in this regard.

²²PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, II, Schubert to Maltzan (Washington), No. 23 (zu IV Chi 1637), August 15, 1925. Berlin also would not take a direct initiative with the Chinese for fear of "loss of face." *Ibid.*, private letter Schubert to Winterfeld (e.o. IV Chi 1579), August 7, 1925.

²³*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, No. 35 (IV Chi 1377), July 11, 1925; Note [Trautmann?] for LR Bethcke, no No., n.d. [July 13-29, 1925].

of the United States, the power entrusted under the terms of the Nine-Power Agreement on the Chinese Customs Tariff for inviting states to adhere to it. The article pointed out the erroneous premises of an earlier dispatch from Herr Salzmann, *Vossische Zeitung* correspondent in China; Salzmann had demanded that Germany attend the forthcoming Special Conference, but this was not possible without an invitation by the Chinese or adherence to the Nine-Power Customs Agreement which required an invitation from the United States. Then the advantages for China of German attendance were outlined, and the observation was made that Germany fulfilled all the requisite conditions for adherence.²⁴

The American government however had adopted the position that Germany was not eligible for adherence to the Customs Agreement. The United States was prepared to invite only those states having tariff treaties with China at the time of the Washington Conference providing for a tariff rate not exceeding 5 per cent *ad valorem*; Germany had only a trade treaty with no fixed tariff rate and hence did not fulfill the requirement.

This somewhat legalistic attitude was resented in Berlin, and despite initiatives by the German Ambassador in Washington²⁵ and by Boyé to the American Minister in Peking,²⁶ the United States refused to alter

²⁴*Ibid.*, rough draft, draft, and clipping from *Hamburg Fremden-Blatt* (e.o. IV Chi 1580), August 7, 1925.

²⁵*Ibid.*, Schubert to Maltzan, No. 23 (zu IV Chi 1637), August 15, 1925; Maltzan to AA, No. 81 (IV Chi 1689), August 17, 1925; Maltzan to AA, No. 88 (IV Chi 1712), August 18, 1925.

²⁶*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, No. 41 (IV Chi 1732), August 22, 1925; Trautmann to Maltzan, No. 31 (zu IV Chi 1732 & 1734), August 24, 1925. See also *FRUS* 1925, I, 851-52, MacMurray (Peking) to Washington, No. 423, September 30, 1925; *ibid.*, 854, Acting Secretary of State Grew to Peking, No. 278, October 3, 1925.

its position. It seemed to Berlin that the opportunity to end Germany's isolation in the Far East was slipping away.

It is in this light that the American invitation to Germany on October 20, 1925 to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty on the "Open-Door" must be viewed. Apparently, the United States was reluctant to take this step until Germany's position in Europe had been clarified by the Locarno Conference.²⁷ At least this was the interpretation adopted by the Wilhelmstrasse and once again the Americans were queried about their attitude toward German participation in the Special Conference. Again to no avail, for Germany never was invited by the United States to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty on the Customs Tariff²⁸ nor was she invited by China to participate in the Special Conference which convened in Peking on October 26, 1925.²⁹ Perhaps it was just as well considering the uproar that developed as a result of Germany's announced intention to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty on the "Open Door."³⁰

²⁷*PA*, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, II, U.S. Secretary of State Kellogg to Stresemann, October 1, 1925. Although the American invitation was dated October 1 and MacMurray in Peking was informed of its issuance on October 3 (*FRUS* 1925, I, Grew to Peking, No. 278), the note was not passed to Berlin until October 20, four days after Locarno and six days prior to the convening of the Special Tariff Conference. See also *PA*, *Bü St. S. Chi*, I, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 210), January 30, 1926; *ADAP*, B, III, Doc. No. 41.

²⁸*FRUS* 1925, I, 761-62.

²⁹*Ibid.*, 839-40, Chinese Minister to Washington Alfred (Shih Chao-chi) Sze to Secretary of State, August 19, 1925. The conference was a qualified failure, initially making progress toward the reforms proposed by China, but breaking down as a result of the disintegration of the Peking regime, the opposition of Canton, and the inability of certain nations to agree. It expired by late summer 1926. For details see Borg, 95-121; Pollard, 271-79; Iriye, 81-87; *FRUS* 1925, I, 833-85; *FRUS* 1926, I, 743-863, esp. "Report of the American Delegation to the Secretary of State," 766-844, July 8, 1926.

³⁰An earlier study of the dispute is Beverley D. Causey, Jr., "Why Germany Never Signed the Nine-Power Treaty," *Far Eastern Quarterly*, I, (Aug., 1942), 364-77.

The Wilhelmstrasse viewed this instrument as a device to end Germany's isolation in China and perhaps find some leverage with the Chinese. It was believed in Berlin that no conflict existed between the principles codified in this treaty and the policy which Germany pursued toward China. Therefore the Chinese reaction to Germany's announced adherence came as somewhat of a shock.

The question was submitted to the Cabinet early in November by Foreign Minister Stresemann,³¹ following which a communication containing Germany's acceptance of the invitation, subject to ratification by the *Reichstag*, was passed to the United States on December 23, 1925.³² Although the Wilhelmstrasse regarded ratification as provided for by Article 68 of the Weimar Constitution to be a mere formality,³³ the United States took the position that the German note in itself did not constitute adherence.³⁴ The matter had to be laid before the *Reichstag*.

This the Wilhelmstrasse was unable to do. A major controversy had erupted over Germany's announcement on December 29, 1925 of adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty, an announcement susceptible to misinterpretation by the Chinese inasmuch as Berlin had failed to reassure them in advance that

³¹PA, RM, RM 8: *Beziehungen zu ausländischen Staaten*, III, Stresemann to *Reichskanzlei Sekretariat* (IV Chi 2265), November 3, 1925.

³²PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Konferenz*, II, Stresemann to Secretary of State Kellogg (zu IV Chi 2588), December 17, 1925; *FRUS* 1926, I, 1001-1002, Schurman to Kellogg, December 23, 1925.

³³*FRUS* 1926, I, 1014, Schurman to Kellogg, No. 760, February 6, 1926.

³⁴*Ibid.*, 1003-1004, State Department to Schurman, No. 319, January 16, 1926.

no basic change in Germany's China policy was contemplated.³⁵ This oversight seems proof that the Wilhelmstrasse believed that not only would German participation in the future in China's multilateral discussions be beneficial and welcome to the latter, but that the principles of the Nine-Power Treaty were compatible with respect for China's sovereignty.

Such assumptions rested on a misinterpretation of the degree of China's new found militancy. From Peking's perspective, the German decision to adhere raised the disturbing prospect that Germany had resolved to close ranks with the Treaty Powers. And the Nine-Power Treaty now was regarded by the Chinese as intended to modify the old Treaty System, a modification that already had been accomplished in-so-far as Sino-German relations were concerned. Hence, German adherence was regarded as a retrogressive step.³⁶

Therefore the Peking regime launched a diplomatic offensive with the intent of persuading Germany to withdraw her adherence. In Berlin, the Chinese Minister, Wei Ch'en-tsu, called on State Secretary von Schubert on the day after New Years' to request the government's decision to adhere be cancelled; undiplomatically Wei drew a parallel between the Washington Treaties and the Versailles Treaty, an indication of the

³⁵ Cf. Causey, "Nine Power Treaty," 369. Peking was informed by a diplomatic note on December 31, 1925. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, III, Boyé to AA, No. 73 (IV Chi 257), Anlage (Waichiao Pu to Legation Peking, January 6, 1926), January 11, 1926.*

³⁶ There is some importance in mentioning the Wilhelmstrasse's belief that the affair was also linked to the personal ambitions of the Chairman of the Special Conference (and later Nationalist Foreign Minister), Dr. C. T. Wang (Wang Cheng-t'ing). His extreme nationalism was thought to conceal his ambition to supplant the current Foreign Minister in the Peking regime, Shen Jui-lin (which he did by January 11, 1926). Boyé characterized him as a "professional demagogue." See *PA, Bll St. S. Chi, I, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 210), January 30, 1926; Memo Balser, no No., March 24, 1926; RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 4, January 6, 1926.*

degree of Chinese concern, but he quickly withdrew the suggestion after a strong remonstrance by Schubert, a measure of the German distaste for the latter instrument.³⁷ A few days later China submitted a *démarche* which argued that the Washington Treaties were not compatible with the principles of equality and reciprocity which constituted the basis of the Sino-German Treaty of 1921.³⁸ The Waichiao Pu also voiced its displeasure to Boyé in Peking, arguing that since Germany no longer possessed "unequal rights" in China, her adherence to the "Open Door" was superfluous.³⁹

In all of this, the German Minister to China suspected that perhaps the Soviet Ambassador to China, Karakhan, had a hand in the game.⁴⁰

³⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Konferenz*, III, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 14), January 2, 1926.

³⁸PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, I, Wei Ch'en-tsu to Stresemann (IV Chi 52). January 6, 1926. The Chinese were not the first to criticize the direction German policy appeared to be taking. What Trautmann characterized as the "völkisch" press in Germany already had evidenced its hostility. *Ibid.*, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV 210), January 30, 1926. Furthermore, the geopolitician Karl Haushofer, writing in the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, and Admiral von Hollweg, a DNVP publicist in the *Bergesch-Märkischen Zeitung*, had attacked the Locarno Agreement as a sacrifice of Germany's future role in Asia for a "mess of pottage." As a result of German adherence to the "Open Door" Treaty, further attacks could be expected from those quarters which held that Germany's destiny lay in an Asian continental bloc of Russia-Germany-China (or Japan). These expected criticisms were met by an article defending the government's policy, written in the Wilhelmstrasse and published anonymously early in January 1926 in the liberal *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Copies of Haushofer's and Hollweg's articles are in PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Zwischenstaatliche aussenpolitische Probleme - Völkerbund*, I. A rough draft of Trautmann's article, undated and unsigned but in his handwriting, also is in this file. The clipping from the *Frankfurter Zeitung* is in PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Sicherheitspakt* (IV Chi 2565).

³⁹PA, RM, 37 *Chi*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 4, January 6, 1926; Boyé to AA, No. 5, January 8, 1926; Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Konferenz*, III, Boyé to AA, No. 73 (IV Chi 257), January 11, 1926.

⁴⁰PA, RM, 37 *Chi*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 4, January 6, 1926.

The Chinese reaction to Germany's announced adherence however needed little prodding from the Russians, and Boyé's suspicions probably reflected his anti-communist and anti-Nationalist views. Yet he correctly discerned a community of interest between Peking and Moscow in the matter of Germany's decision to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty. There is no doubt that Russia was profoundly disturbed by Germany's decision to join the Washington Powers. A few months earlier, the Locarno Pact had opened the way for Germany's admission to the League of Nations and now, with apparent German reacceptance into the camp of the western powers in Asia, the *détente* with the West seemed complete; once again the Soviet Union appeared threatened with isolation, and to forestall that development resolved to give support to the Chinese campaign against Germany's proposed adherence, support incidentally which paralleled Soviet pressure on Berlin to conclude a treaty of neutrality and non-aggression in Europe.⁴¹

The German decision came at a particularly inauspicious time for Russia. In October 1925 Germany had been approached with a view to a more formal coordination of policy vis-à-vis China.⁴² Perhaps the Russian aim was to secure German assistance in the ongoing negotiations with Peking,⁴³

⁴¹See Walsdorff, 59-180; Herbert Helbig, *Die Träger der Rapallo-Politik* (Göttingen, 1958), *passim*; Lionel Kochan, *Russia and the Weimar Republic* (Cambridge, England, 1954), 91-119; Kurt Rosenbaum, *Community of Fate: German-Soviet Diplomatic Relations 1922-1928* (Syracuse, N.Y., 1965), 188-219; Kochan, *Struggle for Germany*, 46-50; ADAP, B, II.1, 10ff. See esp. Doc. No. 12, Memo Schubert, December 19, 1925. German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty is mentioned in none of the above cited secondary sources on Soviet-German relations.

⁴²PA, *BH St. S. Chi*, I, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 210), January 30, 1926; ADAP, B, III, 81-85. See also PA, *Abt. IV, Po 3 adh.: China-Russland*, III, private letter Botschaftsrat Hey (Moscow) to Trautmann (IV Chi 2555), November 26, 1925.

⁴³See Peter Tang, 178ff; Pollard, 200-204; Xenin Joukoff Eudin and Robert C. North, *Soviet Russia and the East 1920-1927: A Documentary Survey* (Stanford, 1957), 248.

but it seems more likely that Moscow was sounding out the depth of Germany's swing to the West.⁴⁴ Karakhan, for one, expressed his personal apprehension about Germany's apparent adhesion to the western camp.⁴⁵

There was some justification for Russia's concern. The Wilhelmstrasse was of the opinion that the Soviet government was pursuing a policy of subversion in China and that closer association was undesirable.⁴⁶ Of particular importance was the belief that Russia's provocative policy in China was directed mainly at Great Britain with whom good relations were essential for Germany⁴⁷ - a belief engendered by the 1924 confrontation between the southern government and Britain. Although Berlin did not feel that it was opting for either camp in Asia but simply joining the new order taking shape in the Far East, there is no doubt that Berlin had concluded that cooperation in China with Russia was as dangerous as it was undesirable. These considerations lay behind the Wilhelmstrasse's decision to avoid giving a firm answer to the Soviet Union with regard to coordination of policy in China.

The German announcement of adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty in late December 1925 thus undoubtedly was a shock to the Soviet Union.⁴⁸

⁴⁴It is noteworthy that the proposal for cooperation was made on October 17, i.e., the day after the Locarno agreements were initialled by Stresemann. *ADAP, B, III, Note, p.82.* The report of Hey to the AA (A 1649) of October 17, 1925 has not been found, but it was foreign service policy to communicate such information on the same day.

⁴⁵*PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 69, October 24, 1925.*

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

⁴⁷*PA, BU St.S. Chi, I, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 210), January 30, 1926; RM, 37 Chi, I, Schubert to Tokyo, No. 1, January 5, 1926.*

⁴⁸Russia had not been informed in advance of the step because she for her part had not given Germany advance notice of the Neutrality and Non-Aggression Pact signed with Turkey on December 17, 1925. *PA, RM, 37 Chi,*

Soviet ire was expressed almost immediately in an article entitled "The Logic of Locarno," published in *Izvestia* on January 6, 1926. The Washington Treaties were attacked as agreements between unequal partners, the exploiters and the exploited; Locarno was compelling Germany once more to join the exploiters, as her adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty plainly demonstrated.⁴⁹ This article signalled the inception of a parallel Chinese-Russian campaign to compel Germany to withdraw her adherence. Although areas of friction existed between the two countries, and a major crisis would flare up in 1927, Moscow and Peking (and Canton)⁵⁰ had made common cause to prevent Germany joining the western camp in Asia.

The diplomatic offensive which Peking launched in January 1926 aimed at convincing Berlin to withdraw its declaration to adhere and at Washington to withdraw its invitation. The Wilhelmstrasse rejected all Chinese notes firmly, but "in a friendly manner"⁵¹ in the belief the

I, Schubert to Tokyo, No. 1, January 5, 1926. Russia had not been invited to adhere to any of the Washington agreements, both for political reasons and because she did not meet the necessary requisites contemplated in the treaties. She had however striven actively, through French mediation in Tokyo and Washington, to obtain an invitation to the Customs Conference.

⁴⁹PA, *Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz*, III, *Lektorat Russland* ("Die Logik Locarnos," translation of article from *Izvestia*, January 6, 1926), January 15, 1926. *Tass*, the Soviet news agency, circulated the same article in China on January 6, 1926. *Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, No. 481 (IV Chi 516), February 17, 1926. See also the conversation of *Ministerialdirektor* Wallroth with Soviet Counsellor of Embassy Bratman-Brodowski, *ibid.*, Memo Wallroth, no No. January 13, 1926.

⁵⁰The Second Kuomintang Conference convened in Canton on January 2, 1926 firmly in the hands of the leftists. The right-wing faction (Western Hills Conference Group) which called for expulsion of the Soviet advisors and an end to the Soviet alliance was formally expelled from the KMT. See Clubb, 130ff.

⁵¹See PA, *Bü St.S. Chi*, I, Wei Ch'en-tsu to Stresemann, February [*sic*, Jan.] 16, 1926; Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 210), January 30, 1926; *Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz*, Wei Ch'en-tsu to Stresemann (IV Chi 162), January 21, 1926; Wallroth to Legation Peking, No. 11 (zu IV Chi 118), January 18, 1926; RM, 37 *Chi*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 10 (IV Chi 98), January 14, 1926.

Chinese were bluffing. The State Department likewise rejected China's argument that Germany was not legally eligible for adherence, and categorically rejected Peking's contention that the Nine-Power Treaty simply represented a variation of the "Unequal Treaty" system,⁵² going so far at one point as to categorize it as China's *magna carta*.⁵³

For Peking, the issue involved more than German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty; the Chinese attack was actually designed to undermine the entire legal and moral status of the Washington Treaties. This is the conclusion which can be drawn from the Chinese note to Washington demanding the withdrawal of the invitations to adhere which had been issued simultaneously to Switzerland, Chile, Persia, Bolivia, and Peru. The grounds of the demand were either legal, i.e., that the treaty relationship between these states and China had not yet come into force at the time the Nine-Power Treaty was concluded,⁵⁴ or that bilateral treaties based on equality and reciprocity already in force made their adherence superfluous.⁵⁵

But in Berlin, the Wilhelmstrasse viewed the controversy from the perspective of German prestige. Of particular importance was the feeling that Germany was not receiving the respect due her and that Peking was hampering the achievement of Germany's return to equality of status in Asia, as exemplified by the statement of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang to

⁵²FRUS 1926, I, 1002-1003, Kellogg to Schurman (Berlin), No. 11, January 9, 1926; *ibid.*, 1004-1005, MacMurray to Kellogg, No. 425, Enclosure, January 22, 1926; PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 11, January 16, 1926.

⁵³PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 11, January 16, 1926.

⁵⁴The legal argument was flawed; according to the terms of the Treaty, invitations to adhere were to be issued only after ratification.

⁵⁵FRUS 1926, I, 1007, Sze to Kellogg, January 22, 1926.

the American Minister in Peking, "You cannot reinstate Germany as a [Unequal Treaty] Power."⁵⁶ The general opinion in the Wilhelmstrasse was that since the conclusion of the 1921 Sino-German Treaty China's attitude had been "frankly bad,"⁵⁷ an opinion that did not take sufficient account of the chaotic state of China's government. Nevertheless, such considerations influenced Berlin's policy as pressure mounted.

Within a few weeks, the dispute left the diplomatic arena and entered the public domain. On January 27, 1926 the Communist Party organ in Berlin, *Die Rote Fahne*, published an article entitled "Germany in the League of China-Plunderers," which drew a parallel between Locarno and the Nine-Power Treaty and asserted that Germany was rejoining the anti-Chinese front of the imperialist powers.⁵⁸ Simultaneously, an article appeared in Peking which asserted that by inviting Germany to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty, the United States had demonstrated hostility toward China's legitimate aspirations and a desire to encourage Germany to put China into further bondage by nullifying the 1921 Sino-German Treaty; both the Wilhelmstrasse and the State Department interpreted this as an attempt to

⁵⁶PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 11, January 16, 1926; *Bü St. S. Chi*, I, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 210), January 30, 1926. Although China was basically concerned that Germany was rejoining the common front as exemplified in the phrase "Unequal-Treaty Power," Germany placed the emphasis on the freedom of action and prestige associated with the word "Power." (The sentence is in English in the original.) See also Causey, "Nine Power Treaty," 372; and Betz, 729-30. Since Betz quotes this sentence (without citation), he obviously based his account on German Foreign Ministry sources.

⁵⁷PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, I, Memo Balser, no No., March 24, 1926.

⁵⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, III, "Deutschland im Bund der Chinarbeiter," *Die Rote Fahne*, January 27, 1926. The Wilhelmstrasse suspected Minister Wei was behind this article; he denied complicity but admitted discussing the matter with radical Chinese students in Berlin. *Ibid.*, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 179), January 27, 1926; Schubert to Boyé, No. 17, February 2, 1926.

stir up American public opinion.⁵⁹

The Chinese Minister in Berlin, Wei, was active in instigating similar agitation. On the day following the article in *Die Rote Fahne*, he was interviewed by the *Kölnische Zeitung* and a week later by the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*; in both papers Wei argued that the 1921 Sino-German Treaty and the Nine-Power Treaty were incompatible. Germany's relations with China already were ordered on the basis of equality and reciprocity, and German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty implied an ulterior motive.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Chinese students in Germany, members of the Kuomintang and of the *Hauptverband der chinesischen Studenten in Deutschland*, made common cause with the Peking regime, bombarding both the Wilhelmstrasse and the *Reichstag* with protests in early February.⁶¹ The links among the Kuomintang students, the German Communist Party, and the Soviet Union portended further problems for the German government.

Friction with the Soviet Union was a matter the Wilhelmstrasse did not view with equanimity.⁶² In an effort to pacify the Soviet Union, State Secretary Schubert requested Ambassador Brockdorff-Rantzau to tell the Russians that Germany's accession to the Nine-Power Treaty had nothing to do with Locarno but was meant only to improve Germany's international status by once again including her in multilateral discussions. There was

⁵⁹FRUS 1926, I, 1010-1011, MacMurray to Kellogg, No. 64, February 3, 1926; PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 19, February 3, 1926.

⁶⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, III, *Kölnische Zeitung*, January 28, 1926; *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (Berlin), February 6, 1926; Wallroth to Peking, No. 24 (zu IV Chi 256), February 6, 1926.

⁶¹BA, R 43I/56, *Sektion der KMT in Deutschland* to Chancellor Dr. Luther (RK 839), February 4, 1926, 144-45; Causey, "Nine-Power Treaty," 376.

⁶²The current Russian-German talks on a Non-aggression pact (which culminated in the Treaty of Berlin initialled on April 24, 1926) was only one of the various matters then affecting relations between the two countries which could be further complicated.

no change in Germany's policy toward China and no thought of proceeding in common with other powers against Russia.⁶³ These assertions were true, but from the perspective of the Soviet Union an end to Germany's isolation in China was equivalent to her adherence to the "ranks of the imperialists."

The German Ambassador in Moscow was not convinced, either. A consistent opponent of Stresemann's policy of *rapprochement* with the West, he had pursued single-mindedly his desire to strengthen Russian-German ties begun at Rapallo. Brockdorff-Rantzau had been disturbed by the implications of Locarno, and now he visualized the strain on German-Russian relations increasing to the snapping point. Therefore, prior to fulfilling his instructions he took it upon himself to wire his apprehensions to Berlin, arguing that the treaty's significance lay much less in the provisions regarding China's sovereignty and integrity and Western renunciation of monopoly privileges than in the article which aimed at elimination of competition among the powers in China. This meant treating China as an "*Objekt*"⁶⁴ in settling the conflict of interests between the powers.⁶⁵ He also pointed out that in addition to embittering

⁶³PA, RM 37 Chi, I, Schubert to Brockdorff-Rantzau, No. 80 (zu IV Chi 244), February 8, 1926. In Tokyo, Ambassador Solf was instructed to use similar arguments in conversation with the Russians, and to observe that the invitation from the United States to adhere was dated October 1, some two weeks prior to Locarno! PA, Abt. IV, Po 3 adh.: *China-Russland*, I, AA to Solf (IV Chi 203), February 4, 1926.

⁶⁴*Marginalia* by Legationsrat Bethcke: "Russian slogan! Reciprocal limitations of the Powers."

⁶⁵Presumably Brockdorff-Rantzau was referring to Article III, Section 3, of the Nine-Power Treaty which stated:

"The Contracting Powers, other than China, agree . . . to use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China."

At the Washington Conference, Dr. Wellington Koo, during the final meeting

German-Russian relations, Germany's adherence could involve her in the strife surfacing in China.⁶⁶ Foreign Minister Stresemann replied on February 19, 1926, refuting Brockdorff-Rantzau's arguments in detail and attributing the agitation in Berlin to "communistic" Chinese students, probably inspired by Soviet intrigues.⁶⁷ The exchange between the two men is further indication that the Wilhelmstrasse had dug in its heels, determined that for reasons of prestige the issue had to be seen through to a successful conclusion.

Meanwhile, student agitation in Berlin mounted steadily, and a new issue was found by the Chinese to inspire emotional outrage. On February 11, 1926 the former governor of Kiaochow, Vice-Admiral von Meyer-Waldeck, delivered a lecture before the *Akademische Kolonialbund* at the University of Berlin on "The German Protectorate of Kiaochow before, during, and after the World War," which in itself was provocative. But to add insult to injury he chose to refer to Germany's former possessions in China as a protectorate (*Schutzgebiet*) rather than a leased-territory (*Pachtgebiet*).⁶⁸ Informal objections from the Chinese

of the Committee of the Whole prior to the submission of the drafts for approval in plenary session, had received confirmation that the principle of "equal opportunity" applied to the Powers among themselves and not to China on the one side and the Powers on the other. See Westel W. Willoughby, *China at the Conference: A Report* (Baltimore, 1922), 205-21.

⁶⁶PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Brockdorff-Rantzau to AA, No. 171 (IV Chi 303), February 13, 1926; ADAP, B, III, 115-116. According to Dyck, 32, Rantzau during this period was "almost beside himself with anxiety" over a possible French-Russian *rapprochement*.

⁶⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, Stresemann to Embassy Moscow, No. 108 (zu IV Chi 303), February 19, 1926; ADAP, B, III, 131-33.

⁶⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, III, Verbal Note of Chinese Legation Berlin to AA (IV Chi 310), February 15, 1926.

Legation had no results,⁶⁹ and the lecture led to a formal note of protest to the Foreign Ministry and to a number of protests by Kuomintang students. At the same time, a telegram ostensibly from the Chinese community was publicized in Peking, asserting that the reacquisition of Kaiochow was being contemplated by Germany, and the newspaper *She Hui Jih Pao* published a report of a "Special Correspondent in Germany" confirming this, an action obviously designed to arouse Chinese public opinion.⁷⁰ In Germany protests against Meyer-Waldeck's lecture continued and led to a further exchange of notes between the Chinese Legation and the Foreign Ministry.⁷¹ The pressure became so uncomfortable that the German authorities requested the former governor to alter the title of future lectures and preface them with the observation that no one in Germany contemplated reacquiring the former leased-territory.⁷²

The combined Soviet-Chinese and Kuomintang-Communist campaign to prevent ratification had its desired effect. In Germany, the virulent feelings stirred up by the issue convinced some members of the *Ostasiatischer Verein* that the proposed adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty was potentially dangerous. These hard-headed businessmen feared the consequences which could ensue in China for German trade and commerce, perhaps remembering the boycott against Great Britain which had been

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, Memo Trautmann, no No., February 11, 1926.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, No. 27 (IV Chi 397), February 26, 1926; Boyé to AA, No. 755 (IV Chi 653), *Anlage* 1 (Clipping from the *She Hui Jih Pao* of March 7, 1926), March 9, 1926.

⁷¹*Ibid.*, Chinese Legation Berlin to AA (IV Chi 452), March 5, 1926; Foreign Ministry to Chinese Legation Berlin (zu IV Chi 452), March 31, 1926.

⁷²PA, Abt. IV, Kol-Po 2 Chi: *Das Schutzgebiet Kiautschaou*, III, private letter Trautmann to Meyer-Waldeck (IV Chi 771), April 16, 1926.

carried out in the south in the previous year with such good effect. The Chairman of the *OAV*, Dr. Mohr, wrote personally to a foreign service official on the East Asia desk in February, requesting that ratification by the *Reichstag* be delayed until opinions of members in China could be solicited.⁷³ Ambassador Wilhelm Solf in Tokyo, who stood close to German trading interests in the Far East, also wrote privately to the Foreign Ministry to express his misgivings about probable Chinese reactions; whether or not Germany's adherence meant opting for the West, the psychological effect would be the same. He feared that Germany might be drawn into the impending conflict in China between the Nationalists and the Peking regime, and argued that Germany therefore must remain aloof in China from any power grouping. (Apparently Solf was more aware of the implications of "rejoining" the Treaty Powers than was the Wilhelmstrasse.) He added that leading men of trade and commerce had expressed their concern to him about possible complications for German business in China.⁷⁴

Although agitation in Peking had remained limited to the circles close to the current cabinet, notably Foreign Minister Wang, and to radical student groups,⁷⁵ even Boyé now recommended that submission of the Treaty

⁷³*PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, III, Mohr to Trautmann (IV Chi 356), February 9, 1926. A number of articles expressing apprehension appeared at the time in various German business journals. See Causey, "Nine-Power Treaty," 377.*

⁷⁴*PA, Bll St.S. Chi, I, private letter Solf to Schubert (IV Chi 450), February 2, 1926; ADAP, B, III, 91-94. The letter arrived on February 28, 1926. Schubert was not as yet convinced of the possible foreign relations complications and replied in this vein on March 5, 1926. PA, Bll St.S. Chi, I, Schubert to Solf, No. 39 (zu IV Chi 450), March 4, 1926. Solf later repeated his apprehensions in a letter to Dr. Mohr of the OAV, and expressed his hope that since ratification had been deferred the whole affair would simply fade away. BA, Nachlass Solf, No. 122, Solf to Mohr, April 29, 1926.*

⁷⁵*PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, IV, Boyé to AA, No. 481 (IV Chi 516), February 17, 1926.*

for ratification be deferred. The Tariff Conference was stalled and there was little likelihood that it would expand its agenda to a general consideration of China's affairs.⁷⁶ The Wilhelmstrasse concurred with Boyé's recommendation, and since the affair was escalating out of all proportion, the decision was taken to shelve ratification temporarily.⁷⁷

Even though Chinese agitation continued and in March the affair became part of a heated attack by Communist Deputies in the *Reichstag* on Stresemann's "pro-Chamberlain" foreign policy,⁷⁸ altered circumstances in China seemed to open a way to settle the diplomatic issue with Peking.⁷⁹ The allied armies of warlords Chang Tso-lin and Wu P'ei-fu were successful in their campaign against Feng YÜ-hsiang's Kuominchün ("People's Army")⁸⁰ by April 1926, the power group under which the Peking regime had operated since December 1925. Even before the Kuominchün had been forced to withdraw from Peking, a cabinet shuffle had occurred⁸¹ on March 5, 1926, but for a while no one could be prevailed upon to take over the portfolio of Minister of Foreign Affairs. Finally, after much confusion, W. W. Yen assumed the posts of Premier and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs on

⁷⁶PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, No. 26, February 22, 1926; Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, III, AA to Mohr, n.d.; Wallroth to Boyé, No. 117, February 24, 1926.

⁷⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, III, note (zu IV Chi 359) n.d. [probably February 23, 1926]. Notations on the memo indicate it was circulated throughout the entire department between February 25 and March 6, 1926.

⁷⁸Causey, "Nine-Power Treaty," 377.

⁷⁹Peking had let the matter drop early in February in so far as the United States was concerned.

⁸⁰Literally "Nationalist Army," but usually translated as "People's Army" to avoid confusion with the army of the Kuomintang.

⁸¹C.T. Wang was dropped from the cabinet; his personal role in the crisis was regarded by the Wilhelmstrasse as very significant.

May 13, 1926, in the so-called Regency Government.⁸² Yen was known to be friendly toward Germany,⁸³ and it was during his tenure in office that the Wilhelmstrasse made an agreement which was thought to have ended Chinese agitation and cleared the way for ratification.

A concurrent event permitted the Wilhelmstrasse to try political leverage in order to secure Peking's agreement to German adherence. The Locarno Treaties signed on December 1, 1925 envisaged Germany's admission to the League of Nations with a permanent seat on the Council in recognition of her status as a great power. In 1926, the Chinese, for reasons of prestige, eagerly desired reelection to a non-permanent seat on the Council.⁸⁴ Since it was assumed in Berlin that Germany would receive her Council seat without difficulty, a scheme was concocted by the East Asia desk of the Wilhelmstrasse to choke off Chinese agitation against German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty: Germany, if requested by China, would support her aspirations at Geneva if the reciprocal concession of accepting the Treaty was forthcoming.⁸⁵ Apparently, the Wilhelmstrasse envisaged presenting the proposal to the Chinese delegates to a special session of the League called for March of 1926 to consider

⁸²FRUS 1926, I, 616, MacMurray to Kellogg, No. 28, May 14, 1926. See also Clubb, 129ff.; Li Chien-nung, 490ff.; Pollard, 278-79. On the Kuominchün-Fengtien struggle for control of Peking, see also Hsi-hseng Chi, *The Chinese Warlord System: 1916-1928* (Washington, 1969), 45-47.

⁸³It should be recalled that Yen had been Chinese Minister in Berlin until the rupture of Sino-German relations in 1917, and after the war instrumental in the preliminary discussion leading to the 1921 Sino-German Treaty ultimately concluded under his aegis as Foreign Minister in Peking.

⁸⁴China had held a non-permanent seat from 1920-1922.

⁸⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: *Völkербund*, I, Memo Bethcke (IV Chi 460), March 5, 1926.

Germany's admission; despite some preliminary discussions, however, the offer does not appear to have been made before the special session foundered on the demands of Brazil and Spain for permanent seats on the Council.⁸⁶ Consequently, it was Boyé in Peking who finally made the deal contemplated by the Wilhelmstrasse, reaching an agreement in May of 1926 with W. W. Yen that after Germany's entry into the League she would support China's petition for a non-permanent seat on the Council, in return for which China would accept German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty and cease agitation.⁸⁷

In fact, after the departure of Wang at the beginning of March, the Chinese press had shown little interest in the question, only reprinting a few articles dispatched from students in Berlin without commentary.⁸⁸ The Nationalist and left-wing students in Germany and the Kuomintang in the south of China continued to voice displeasure, but after the launching of Chiang Kai-shek's Northern Expedition in June of 1926, the Nationalists concentrated their attention on gaining German *de jure* recognition. The Soviet Union continued to be concerned that Germany might side with the Treaty Powers with respect to the Nationalist

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Bethcke to Poensgen (Geneva) (IV Chi 497), March 9, 1926; Poensgen to AA (IV Chi 546), March 12, 1926; Memo Schubert (IV Chi 650), March 15, 1926. See also *ADAP*, B, I.1, *Anhang* I, "Tagebuch über die Konferenz in Genf," 707-25. See also F. P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations*, 2 vols. in 1 (London, 1960), 283ff.

⁸⁷ See *PA*, *Abt. IV*, *Po 4 OA: Völkербund*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 51, May 18, 1926; Stresemann to Boyé, No. 55, May 21, 1926; Boyé to AA, No. 85 (IV Chi 1745), July 31, 1926. The *quid pro quo* continued after Dr. Yen relinquished office on June 22, 1926.

⁸⁸ *PA*, *Abt. IV*, *Po 4 OA: Konferenz*, IV, Boyé to AA, No. 1218 (IV Chi 978), April 20, 1926.

drive against the northern warlords,⁸⁹ and repeatedly expressed its opposition to German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty.⁹⁰ However, not Soviet objections but events in China prevented Germany from ever ratifying the Nine-Power Treaty.⁹¹

There is no doubt that the diplomatic campaign waged in the winter of 1925-1926 did not weaken the Wilhelmstrasse's resolve to end German isolation in China by adhering to the Nine-Power Treaty, indeed the controversy may have strengthened it. But, although the question came up again and again during the next decade,⁹² the Treaty was never placed before the *Reichstag* for ratification. The reason lay in the fact that the collapse of the Tariff Conference and the resurgence of Chinese national feeling demonstrated by the success of the Northern Expedition marked the end of the Washington system for all practical purposes. Henceforth, with Great Britain taking the lead even during

⁸⁹ See Chapter II, *supra*.

⁹⁰ See, e.g., PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, IV, Memo Michelsen [re conversation of Soviet Foreign Minister Chicherin with LR Hempel], December 2, 1926.

⁹¹ W.W. Yen abandoned his "single-handed effort to perform the work of a cabinet" in Peking on June 22, 1926. (Pollard, 379.) His departure and the subsequent lack of an effective government in Peking prevented completion of the agreement made by the Chinese to accept German ratification. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, IV, Memo Michelsen, no No., n.d., [late November, 1926].

⁹² During the Far East Crisis of 1932, American Secretary of State Stimson proposed a common *démarche* of the Nine-Power Treaty powers against Japan. He suggested German ratification in order to make Germany eligible. The Wilhelmstrasse replied that ratification was impossible because of the unstable domestic situation. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, IV, Ambassador Prittwitz (Washington) to AA, No. 56 (IV Chi 557), February 22, 1932; Staatssekretär Bülow to Embassy Washington, No. 59, February 22, 1932. In 1933, after the *Machtergreifung*, an official on the East Asia desk suggested that ratification now was feasible and the opportunity should be seized. The idea went no further. *Ibid.*, V, Memo Altenburg, ("Cessat - Auf Anordnung M. D. Meyer, 20.3."), March 8, 1933.

the latter stages of the Special Conference,⁹³ the Treaty Powers found that their separate interests in China could be better served in bilateral relations with China than in attaining a multilateral coordination of interests. Germany likewise reverted to its "low profile" policy in China, maintaining a position of neutrality toward the civil war of 1926-1928.

Why did the Wilhelmstrasse decide to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty, a treaty which only had abstract significance for German policy in China? It seems that the prime motive was to secure recognition of Germany's equality of status with the West in the Far East, a recognition which would complement (as the Russians suspected) that accomplished at Locarno. Even though the Minister to China, Boyé, repeatedly had referred to the "unfriendly" and "insulting" attitude of the Chinese, the decision to risk controversy with Peking and Moscow can not have been taken solely from a desire to ease his position in China.⁹⁴ Likewise, the rejection of the advice not to adhere given by the Ambassadors in Moscow and Tokyo was derived from Berlin's desire to have Germany's position as a Great Power reconfirmed - the overall policy objective of the Weimar Republic. In this context, the significance attributed by the Wilhelmstrasse to Wang's statement concerning "Germany's reinstatement as a power" is made clear.

Although Germany never was able to ratify the Nine-Power Treaty

⁹³Iriye, 82-103, *passim*.

⁹⁴In this connection, the fact that Berlin did not immediately act upon Boyé's requests that steps be taken to end the embarrassing trade in armaments by German nationals with China also underlines the fact that its China-policy took second place to larger foreign policy objectives relating to the revision of Versailles. See Chapter IV, *infra*, for details.

and thereby regain equality of international status with the Treaty Powers in the Far East, its very proferance was seen as significant, symbolizing a desire by the west to readmit Germany into their camp in the Far East. Similarly, Berlin interpreted the outcome of the dispute with China over Germany's announced adherence as beneficial. For one thing, the Wilhelmstrasse concluded that the fruitful cooperation with China thereafter in the League of Nations.⁹⁵ was attributable to the agreement made in 1926 and the increased respect China supposedly had for Germany as a legacy of the incident.⁹⁶ Supposedly, Germany's prestige was enhanced by not bowing to Chinese pressure. This assessment seems erroneous and it is more probable that any "increased respect" derived from the neutral attitude adopted by Berlin toward the Chinese revolution of 1926-1928. In this sense, it was Germany's *non-adherence* which made possible the

⁹⁵As a result of the agreement, Germany supported China in 1926 in her successful bid for election to a non-permanent seat on the League Council. After the rise of the Nationalists, Germany continued her policy of support for China's League aspirations. In 1928 and 1930, she backed China's unsuccessful bids for reelection to the Council, and China's successful replacement of Persia in 1931. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Völkerbund, I, Boyé to AA, No. 85 (IV Chi 1745), July 31, 1926; Boyé to AA, No. 95, September 1, 1926; Schubert to Legation Peking, no No., n.d.; "Abschrift für IV China," (Köpke) (Vbd. 4102), October 15, 1926; *ibid.*, III, Köpke to Legation Peking (zu Vbd. 2399, III), September 1, 1928; Legation Peiping to AA, No. 125 (zu Vbd. 2399), September 4, 1928; *ibid.*, IV, Draft *Aide Mémoire* (zu Vbd. 1938), July 6, 1931; Geneva to AA, No. 77, September 14, 1931. The Wilhelmstrasse also provided aid to the oft-penurious Chinese diplomats at Geneva. See PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Stresemann to German Ambassador in Paris, No. 1150 (e.o. IV Chi 1370), October 1, 1927. The Wilhelmstrasse's support was not entirely altruistic. China, in pursuit of abolishing the "Unequal Treaty" system, strove to have codified in Article 19 of the League Charter (which provided for the periodic review of treaties) the principle of *rebus sic stantibus*. Berlin also supported this position with regard to the Versailles Treaty. See PA, Referat Völkerbund, China: China, I, Memo Trautmann, "China und der Völkerbund" (Vbd. 464), February 8, 1927. See also Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (New York, 1964, orig. 1946), 181-192.

⁹⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, V, Memo Altenburg, March 8, 1933.

relatively easy normalization of relations with the Nationalists accomplished in 1928. A second benefit which the Wilhelmstrasse derived from non-adherence did not materialize until much later. In the late 1930's, although ironically now China requested German participation, Berlin was able to decline in advance an expected invitation to attend the Brussels Conference invoked under the treaty, thereby avoiding complications with Japan.⁹⁷

In conclusion, the German decision to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty in 1925 illustrates Berlin's desire for *rapprochement* with the West. The Wilhelmstrasse accepted controversy with Russia over this issue as it had over Locarno; with regard to China, controversy was not expected with the typical warlord government in Peking and the Nine-Power Treaty was not thought to be injurious to China's legitimate aspirations. It was the unfortunate circumstance that Berlin's adherence coincided with the brief dominance in Peking of the left-leaning Kuominchün that precipitated the dispute with the Peking regime. Still, even with protests coming from the Russians, the Kuomintang, and the Peking regime, the Wilhelmstrasse would not back down. Berlin's posture with regard to German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty underlines the significance given in Weimar Germany to the question of Germany's post-war image. In this issue, no concrete political interests were ever involved; rather policies were formulated with a view to Germany's image and prestige. It was not only in the East "that everything revolved around the non-loss of face."

⁹⁷See *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945* [hereafter cited as *DGFP*], *Series D, 1937-1941* [hereafter cited as *D*] (Washington, 1949-1961), I, 763ff.

CHAPTER IV

GERMANY AND THE CHINESE WEAPONS TRADE

Throughout the 1920's the Wilhelmstrasse strove to maintain a "low profile" in China in pursuit of its basic policies - the reestablishment and enlargement of Sino-German trade and the refurbishment of Germany's image. Nevertheless, as a result of Germany's unique diplomatic status in China during this period, Berlin occasionally found itself in diplomatic controversy with the Treaty Powers, or with one or more of the various Chinese governments, most notably in the affair of the attempted adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty. A more persistent problem however was the steadily increasing involvement of German traders and manufacturers in the flow of arms and munitions to China. While this issue did not lead to any diplomatic confrontations of major proportions, it did cause the Wilhelmstrasse much embarrassment and had a detrimental effect on the new image it was trying to shape both in Europe and the Far East. Moreover, the issue highlights the fundamental difference of opinion between the Wilhelmstrasse and the *Reichswehr* in the matter of arms dealing, differences that ultimately would lead to a parting of the ways on German policy toward armament sales and military advisors in China.

The post-war decade found public opinion in the Western world convinced of the unscrupulous, cynical, and dangerous nature of the armaments industry, and by logical extension, of trade in arms *per se*.

Armament manufacturers were popularly associated with epithets like "merchants of death" and were thought to be instigators of war, a belief intensified by rationalizations about the origins of World War I. The result was strong moral opprobrium becoming attached to all dealings in arms.¹ Further, the post-World War II concept of armaments-as-deterrents to the outbreak of hostilities was not widely accepted. On the contrary, the belief was widespread that the existence of weapons of war actually constituted a positive factor in the outbreak of armed conflict. (An opinion that may well have been true with regard to the warlord pattern of political organization in China.)² International journalism, in search of the sensational, often was alarmist when reporting in this field, making use of innuendo and guilt-by-association to liven the bare facts of the trade. Every charge made in the contest amongst the contending factions in China was given a hearing in the press of the world through the international press agencies.

As a result of the World War and the peace settlement, with its various provisions relating to Germany's disarmament, Germany was particularly vulnerable to international criticism in regard to the trade in armaments. The hatred and suspicion engendered by wartime propaganda which had not yet abated made her apparent violations of legal

¹Typical of the genre of writings which condemned the arms trade are George Seldes, *Iron, Blood and Profits* (New York, 1934); and H. C. Engelbrecht and F. C. Hanighen, *Merchants of Death: A Study of the International Armaments Industry* (New York, 1934). For an analytical study see Clive Trebilock, "Legends of the British Armament Industry, 1890-1914: A Revision," *Journal of Contemporary History*, V, No. 4 (1970), 3-19.

²See the discussion in Donald G. Gillin, "China and the Foreigners, 1911-1950," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, LXVIII, No. 2 (1969), 208-19. An interesting collection of contemporary attitudes and arguments both for and against the international trade in armaments is Julia E. Johnsen, comp., *International Traffic in Arms and Munitions* (New York, 1934).

prohibitions regarding trade in armaments prime targets for attack in the press. This unwelcome press attention was especially troublesome with respect to the Far East. The fact that German nationals gained a leading role in the arms trade with China during the 1920's, a region of turbulence attracting much attention, tended to disturb Germany's carefully cultivated image and led to many complications in the conduct of normal commercial and political relations between Germany and China.

The problem of the arms traffic with China was one which did not affect only Germany. The breakdown of China's central government and the consequent rise of warlordism and endemic civil war made China a lucrative market for war matériel of any provenance. At the same time this growing civil strife was injurious to normal trade and commerce. The Treaty Powers demonstrated their concern by formally imposing an Arms Embargo upon the country in May 1919 until the "restoration of a government in effective control of the whole country" should occur.³ The United States government took the lead in this endeavor, but reservations by Japan and Italy effectively nullified the intended purpose of this first attempt to check the civil strife in China. In succeeding years the British and American governments attempted to strengthen and enlarge the embargo, believing that the civil war in China could not long endure without the influx of foreign arms and munitions of war.⁴ At the

³FRUS 1919, I, 670, Dean of Diplomatic Corps to Chinese Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, May 5, 1919. Initial members of the embargo agreement were Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, the United States, (Tsarist) Russia, Brazil, France, and Japan. (The Tsarist Minister in Peking, Prince Koudacheff, continued to sit with the Diplomatic Body until China withdrew recognition of him on September 23, 1920. See Pollard, 141-160.) Subsequently, Denmark, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Italy adhered.

⁴There was some merit to this assumption. China was very deficient in arms production capacity. See Appendices D-E for a breakdown of the growth of arms trade with China.

Washington Conference on the Limitations of Armaments in 1922 a strengthened resolution was introduced for adoption. However it failed to win general acceptance. Nevertheless, the 1919 Arms Embargo remained nominally in effect, being terminated only in April 1929 after the triumph of the Kuomintang.⁵

Germany of course was not a participant in the Washington discussions, but in accord with the continuing American campaign to strengthen the Embargo⁶ she was invited by the United States in June 1922 to adhere to the draft resolution.⁷ The German Foreign Ministry was not disinterested in this invitation. The German Minister in Peking, Boyé, had reported a number of incidents involving German firms in China engaged in the arms trade, incidents which found their way into the Chinese or Japanese press and caused Germany a good deal of embarrassment.⁸ He urged the Wilhelmstrasse to stop all weapons export

⁵FRUS 1929, II, 523-24. A good discussion of the American policy of embargoing arms traffic with China is Elton Atwater, *American Regulation of Arms Exports* (Washington, 1941), 122-43.

⁶For efforts of the American government to secure acceptance of the strengthened resolution see FRUS 1922, I, 725-45; FRUS 1923, I, 606-16; FRUS 1924, I, 503-43.

⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz, I, Embassy of the United States in Berlin to AA, June 14, 1922.

⁸A typical case involved a German businessman in Harbin, Ernst Weissner (Chairman of the *Reichsdeutsche Vereinigung*, Harbin), who had contracted with the local authorities to deliver weapons and munitions to the value of 100,000 Gold Yen. The shipment was delayed for various reasons and he had approached the German Consulate at Mukden requesting official support against the termination of the contract by warlord Chang Tso-lin of Manchuria. In line with official policy, support was refused by the Consulate, but the affair received a good deal of attention in the local press with consequent unfavorable publicity for Germany. Chang Tso-lin, after all, was then pursuing an independent line from that followed by the internationally recognized regime in Peking. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, II, Boyé to AA, K. No. 206, Anlage 1 (Consul Dr. Walters (Mukden) to Legation Peking, No. 1034,

to China by German firms. Nothing was more suited to stirring up press agitation against Germany and to disillusion sympathetic foreigners, he observed, than this participation of individual German businessmen, with or without official tolerance, in the weapons trade in China.

It is likely that Boyé's opinion of the extreme urgency of the situation was colored by his desire to court favor with the Treaty Powers in order to secure reacceptance of Germany in the Diplomatic Corps and perhaps be accepted once more as an equal in the new framework being shaped as a result of the Washington Conference.⁹ However, whatever his motives, there is no doubt that he correctly saw that the arms traffic was liable to cause serious international problems for Germany. And the revival of German trade in China was already sufficiently hampered by restrictions, including the hostile and suspicious attitude of the Treaty Powers, without adding to the difficulties.

Viewed from a different angle, not only might difficulties with the Treaty Powers or one or another of the Chinese factions be precipitated, but domestic controversy in Germany might ensue. This, too, was a matter with which the Wilhelmstrasse had to concern itself. Any confrontation over the Chinese arms traffic would be an irritating reminder

May 1, 1922); *Anlage 2* ("German Arms and Munitions refused Landing at Dairen," *Manchurian Daily News*, April 29, 1922), May 8, 1922. As early as the autumn of 1921, the British Minister in Peking had reported to London that German firms were importing munitions of war to China, and urged that the matter be discussed at the Washington Conference. Foreign Secretary Curzon was cool to the proposal, observing that Germany already was bound by the Versailles Treaty, and, having lost extraterritoriality in China, could not prevent her nationals in that country from engaging in the arms traffic. See *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, eds. Rohan Butler and J.P.T. Bury [hereafter cited as *DBFP*], *First Series*, XIV, Docs. No. 407 and 412.

⁹For details on Germany's policy vis-à-vis the Washington system, see Chapter III, *supra*.

of German obligations under the Versailles Treaty, as limitations on German freedom of action in armaments were, next to reparations, regarded by the German public as exceptionally burdensome and discriminatory.¹⁰

With these potential difficulties in mind, the Wilhelmstrasse accepted Boyé's assessment of the seriousness of the question and authorized him to announce to the Peking diplomatic body Germany's preparedness to adhere to the May 1919 Arms Embargo and henceforth to participate in discussions on the adoption of the Washington Draft Resolution.¹¹ While the Treaty Powers were thus assured of Germany's good faith, the pledge was not very meaningful since there was no legal way for the German government, having relinquished extraterritoriality, to prevent German nationals in China from engaging in the weapons trade.¹² As for the export of weapons and munitions of war from Germany, a general prohibition was already in effect.

By Article 170 of the Versailles Treaty, Germany was forbidden to import or export war matériel of any type, and in fulfillment of this

¹⁰For elaboration of this argument, see Bernhard Knauss, "Politik ohne Waffen," *Zeitschrift für Politik*, X, No. 3 (Oct., 1963), 249-56.

¹¹PA, *Abteilung IV - Wirtschaft, China: Waffen A: Kriegsmaterial, China* [hereafter cited as *Waffen A: China*], I, AA to OAV (IVb Chi 510), April 9, 1923; *ibid.*, II, Boyé to AA, no No. (II F 2130), May 23, 1925.

¹²It is interesting to note that the United States which consistently opposed the shipment of arms and munitions of war to China although having extraterritorial right was plagued by the same problem. The 1919 Arms Embargo and President Harding's subsequent proclamation of March 4, 1922 (based on a Joint Resolution of Congress of January 31, 1922) prohibited only the *export* of arms from the United States to China, not the importation of arms into China by American citizens. Of course, the latter condition violated the spirit of the Embargo, and the United States worked to limit the violations. See *FRUS 1922*, I, 726-27, Presidential Proclamation No. 1621, March 4, 1922; and subsequent volumes, *passim*.

obligation laws had been promulgated on December 22, 1920¹³ and June 26, 1921.¹⁴ The turbulent conditions in Germany until 1923 however made these laws difficult to enforce and incidents continued to occur in the Far East which affected Germany's image unfavorably.

One factor which stimulated German involvement in the trade was the existence of large stocks of surplus weapons in Germany as a result of demobilization and the disarmament clauses of Versailles. These weapons found their way illegally into the hands of exporters. While a substantial portion of the arms business in these early years was transacted by smugglers, not all the business was in the hands of fly-by-night operators. One of the most venerable of all German China-firms, Carlowitz & Co.,¹⁵ was deeply engaged in the weapons trade with China, concluding for example in 1923 a contract for trucks and grenade detonators of various types with the local military commander in Taiyuanfu.¹⁶ This was not an isolated instance of respected German

¹³ *Reichsgesetzblatt* 1920, 2167.

¹⁴ *Reichsgesetzblatt* 1921, 767. See also Michael Salewski, *Entwaffnung und Militärkontrolle in Deutschland 1919-1927* (München, 1966), 99ff.

¹⁵ In 1925 an article in *Die Rote Fahne* concerning the alleged sale by Carlowitz & Co. of German weapons to Chinese "white guards" (anti-Bolshevik Russian *émigrés* employed by Chinese warlords) inspired the firm to protest to the Foreign Ministry that it had not engaged in any weapons traffic with China since the war. The firm asserted that the frequency with which its activities appeared in the press in this regard was perhaps a result of the leading role it had played in the Chinese arms trade before the war. *PA, Waffen A: China*, II, *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* to AA, no No., July 9, 1925. Notwithstanding the protestations of Carlowitz & Co., the company did play a significant role in the weapons trade between Germany and China.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, I, Consulate Tientsin to AA (II F 1986), March 23, 1923.

companies taking advantage of the profitable trade.¹⁷ Gustav Genschow & Co., Berlin, to take another example, shipped weapons, stored in Berlin, via Hamburg to Tientsin.¹⁸ Numerous other firms, either branch offices in China of German companies or Chinese-registered companies owned by German nationals, contributed to the growing volume of trade in arms between Germany and the Chinese warlords.¹⁹

The Foreign Ministry was unable to fully control the problem. On the one hand, lack of extraterritoriality in China and the impotence of the Chinese central government vis-à-vis the *tuchtns* made any effort at that end futile. Further, the calculated risk²⁰ Berlin had accepted in offering to subscribe to the Arms Embargo proved unproductive; there was not sufficient coordination between the Treaty Powers themselves to

¹⁷ Presumably it was the substantial profit involved in the weapons trade which made the risks tolerable. Certainly, in China itself, profits were high. A used Mauser pistol, for example, brought \$100 U.S. upon landing at Shanghai, \$180 in the Foreign Concession, and \$500 up-river in Szechuan Province. *Ibid.*, Consulate Chungking to AA (II F 3130), September 13, 1923.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Consulate Tientsin to AA (II F 1986), March 23, 1923.

¹⁹ One disturbing case came to the attention of the Wilhelmstrasse in December 1922. Chang Tso-lin had contracted with a Danish firm for the delivery of machinery to the value of some £300,000 for the manufacture of rifles, mountain and field cannon, and artillery shells. Although the prime contract for the expansion of the Mukden factory was held by the Danish company of Nielsen & Winther, two German companies, Friedrich Krupp A.G. and Hirsch Kupfer & Messing Werke, had subcontracted to manufacture much of the machinery in their German factories. News of the transaction was leaked in a general fashion to the press in Manchuria, and specific allusions to German involvement appeared in the Mukden Japanese-language daily *Hoten Shimbun*. Boyé was very concerned that if the particulars became known to the remainder of the foreign press in China, the repercussions could be very unfavorable to Germany. See *PA*, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, Boyé to AA, K. No. 536 (IVb Chi 856), December 22, 1922.

²⁰ It should be observed that the Arms Embargo did not distinguish between the warlords and the recognized Peking government, a government with which Germany currently was negotiating over the financial settlement of the Sino-German Treaty of 1921. See Chapter I, *supra*.

make this Embargo an effective device. And, finally, although regulations existed in Germany prohibiting the manufacture or export of weapons and munitions of war, the disturbed conditions and an unsympathetic bureaucracy too frequently permitted circumvention of the Versailles provisions and its implementing legislation.

The concern with which the Wilhelmstrasse regarded the problem led in April 1923 to a reminder to the *Ostasiatischer Verein* of the legal prohibitions existing against the export of arms and munitions from Germany, and a caution to the German trading companies that in the event of difficulties with the Chinese central government in Peking, no assistance would be forthcoming from the German consular offices. Emphasis was given to the fact that the self-interest of German firms which were striving to reestablish trade ties with China required that they did not participate in the illicit weapons trade, a participation that could only lead to a setback in the continued growth of Sino-German commerce.²¹

The extent of the illegal traffic also induced the Foreign Ministry to inquire of the *Reichswirtschaftsministerium* (RWiM) and the *Reichsfinanzministerium* (RFM) as to what further measures could be taken in order to plug whatever loopholes in the existing regulations were permitting the export of arms and munitions to China.²²

According to the Ministry of Economics, the present laws were adequate to enforce a ban on such traffic, and if the war matériel actually had been exported from Germany to China it must have resulted

²¹PA, *Waffen A: China*, I, AA to OAV (IVb Chi 510), April 9, 1923.

²²*Ibid.*, AA to RWiM and RFM (zu II F 1986), August 1, 1923. This query was made with reference to the Genschow & Co. transaction mentioned above.

from false declaration of wares. Further measures to interdict the trade, such as regulations specifically prohibiting export to China, would not be practical since these could be circumvented without difficulty by shipping to an intermediate country and then transshipping to China.²³ The Ministry of Finance, for its part, assured the Wilhelmstrasse that the subordinate Commissioner for Export Licensing had consistently rejected export permits for arms, including even pistols.²⁴ One can assume that neither Ministry considered the problem pressing compared with efforts during this year of crisis to settle the reparations problem, the occupation of the Ruhr, the stabilization of a new German currency, and the suppression of separatist movements.

There was however another Ministry which had an interest in the continued export overseas of armaments. The *Reichswehr* supported the sale of armaments abroad with a view to maintaining the solvency of the German small arms industry. A continued productive capability in this sphere served to provide matériel for clandestine rearmament and the outfitting of auxiliary units. In these years, it is obscure what proportion of the war matériel leaving Germany for China consisted of newly-manufactured weapons as opposed to war surplus (probably the former was as yet insignificant), but as the balance shifted later the *Reichswehr* showed increasing interest and opposed measures to interdict the traffic.²⁵ What is certain however is that the Wilhelmstrasse was reluctant until 1927 to take more strenuous measures against the export of arms from Germany to China, a policy that undoubtedly reflected the

²³*Ibid.*, *RWIM* to AA (II F 3385), December 3, 1923.

²⁴*Ibid.*, *RFM* to AA (II F 2842), October 3, 1923.

²⁵See *infra*.

support which Foreign Minister Stresemann gave to maintaining the defensive capabilities of Germany,²⁶ and his efforts to remove the military limitations imposed by the Versailles Treaty.

Notwithstanding the assurances from the Ministries of Finance and Economics that existing regulations were adequate to control the traffic, as the civil war in China degenerated into chaos and as the market for arms consequently increased, German firms continued to pursue the trade in weapons and munitions. As a matter of fact, during the next two years the resurgence of German shipping in the Far East and the Arms Embargo imposed by the Treaty Powers on their own nationals, particularly Great Britain and the United States,²⁷ resulted in Germany (or at least German companies) attaining what appeared to the press to be an almost complete monopoly of the traffic. The participating German firms in China, furthermore, claimed that no great difficulties were being created for them by the responsible authorities in Germany in-so-far as the export of small arms was concerned, the largest proportion of the trade. This leads one to suspect that the *Reichswehr* with its policy of illegally exporting armaments²⁸ clandestinely supported this traffic, although no direct evidence is available. What is certain however is

²⁶ See Hans Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany* (Baltimore, 1954), *passim*. Although Dr. Gatzke's study is in part dated and his tone (if not his conclusions) somewhat harsh, the main thrust of Stresemann's policy toward clandestine rearmament is made clear. On *Reichswehr* policy see Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 220-32; Wolfgang Sauer, "Die Mobilmachung der Gewalt," 766-84, in Karl Dietrich Bracher, Wolfgang Sauer, and Gerhard Schulz, *Die Nationalsozialistische Machtergreifung: Studien zur Errichtung des totalitären Herrschaftssystems in Deutschland 1933/34* (2nd. ed., rev.; Köln, 1962); Berenice A. Carroll, *Design for Total War: Arms and Economics in the Third Reich* (The Hague, 1965), 54-72.

²⁷ The 1919 Arms Embargo was tightened somewhat in July 1922 by the accession of Italy. See *FRUS* 1922, I, 734-35.

²⁸ Carroll, 59.

that the financing and insurance of the arms consignments to China was being handled by German companies, including the *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank*.²⁹

During these years, Boyé became increasingly concerned about the deleterious effect of the arms traffic on Germany's public image in China and with the Treaty Powers. A report in January 1924 in an Osaka newspaper about a large shipment of arms from Hamburg for the German firm of Bielfeld & Sun in Tientsin led him to observe that nothing really could be accomplished at his end to stop the import of arms from Germany; even the Peking government found itself impotent in the matter (as in all other matters at this time), although it had recently decreed that weapons purchases throughout the country were permissible only with the prior consent of the "War Ministry." This regulation remained a dead letter - the Peking government was unable to enforce its authority throughout most of China and every independent local military commander was engaged in the purchase of foreign arms. Actually, according to Boyé, the efforts of the Peking government and the Arms Embargo of the Treaty Powers only served to drive up prices and profits,³⁰ thereby encouraging the trade.

Throughout 1924, the number of reported German shipments continued

²⁹PA, *Waffen A: China*, I, Consulate Tientsin to AA (II F 2606), July 26, 1924. One reason for the extensive trade in German small arms was the lack of agreement among German authorities and with the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission as to what should be considered a "weapon of war." Automatic pistols often were termed "police defense weapons." As a matter of fact, the question as to what specific items constituted "war matériel" was one of the most difficult and persistent problems facing the Inter-Allied Control Commission and was never conclusively settled prior to its withdrawal from Germany. See Salewski, 99ff.

³⁰PA, *Waffen A: China*, I, Boyé to AA (II F 379), January 15, 1924.

to multiply,³¹ until in August an incident occurred which threatened to have wider political repercussions. Sun Yat-sen, once again in control of Canton, seized the Norwegian steamer *Hav* which was carrying a large consignment of German weapons ostensibly from "Alfred Bley Müller, Antwerp" to the German firm of Sander Weiler in Canton.³² These arms were destined for the "Merchant Volunteers," a para-military organization supplied and financed by the British and wealthy Chinese compradores to challenge Sun's position in the city. The confiscation precipitated a confrontation between the Chinese revolutionary and the British, with the former protesting to Britain's Labour Prime Minister, Ramsey MacDonald, and appealing to the League of Nations for support, both without results. The dispute ended only in October when Sun suppressed the "Merchant Volunteers" by force of arms.³³

During the controversy, the Wilhelmstrasse feared that it would find itself between two stools. On the one hand, Germany could not afford to offend the British and, on the other, it will be recalled, she was striving to maintain her neutral position toward the civil strife in China and establish a working relationship with the Canton regime.³⁴ Inquiries by the Wilhelmstrasse elicited the information that "Alfred

³¹*Ibid.*, I and II, *passim*. For example, the German steamer *Sophie Rickmers* in May 1924 delivered 4000 Mauser pistols and 2,000,000 cartridges to *tuchtn* Li Ching-lin, a member of the Fengtien clique engaged in the struggle for power in the north. *Ibid.*, II, Consulate Tientsin to AA (II F 2026), May 19, 1924; Li Chien-nung, 481-83.

³²PA, RM, 37 *Chi*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 71, August 18, 1924; *Waffen A: China*, I, Boyé to AA, no No. (II F 2821), August 17, 1924.

³³Isaacs, 68. There is no mention of this episode in the recent study of Wm. Roger Louis, *British Strategy in the Far East, 1919-1931* (Oxford, 1971), but he does examine, 121ff., the conflicting attitudes between the "interventionist" Colonial Office and the more cautious Foreign Office toward the supplying of arms to "anti-communist" elements in China. See also *infra*, 196.

³⁴See Chapter II, *supra*.

Bley Müller, Antwerp" was merely a cover name used on the consignment to conceal the involvement of the head office of Sander Weiler in Hamburg, and that the shipment, consisting of 7000 infantry rifles and 2,000,000 rounds of ammunition ostensibly abandoned by German troops withdrawing from Belgium and France in 1918, had taken place with the connivance of the British government and the permission of the British-controlled Chinese Maritime Customs office in Canton.³⁵ Even more revealing was the fact, not public knowledge at the time, that standing behind the business was the leading British financial institution in the Far East, the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, whose Hamburg affiliate had put up £40,000 to finance the scheme.³⁶ All of this made it appear that Germany was cooperating with the British in their attempts to stem the revolutionary tide in south China and such an impression was likely to lead to boycotts and agitation against German business and to undo previous German efforts to maintain correct relations with the Nationalists.

Fortunately for Germany, these details did not become public at the time and she thus avoided the embarrassment of being linked with the British in Chinese eyes. However, the Wilhelmstrasse was sufficiently concerned about a recurrence of such an incident to instruct its various branch offices throughout Germany which dealt with export trade matters to approach the local firms in their respective regions and attempt to

³⁵PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Maltzan to Consulate-General Antwerp, no No., August 19, 1924; Franoux (Antwerp) to AA, no No., August 20, 1924; Maltzan to Legation Peking, no No., August 23, 1924; Maltzan to Legation Peking, no No., August 25, 1924.

³⁶PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Maltzan to Legation Peking, no No., August 25, 1924. The organizer of the "Merchant Volunteers," Ch'ên Lien-po, was chief compradore for the Bank. Isaacs, 68.

convince them that the weapons trade with China, even in items such as pistols not specifically banned by the Versailles Treaty and the Inter-Allied Control Commission, was damaging to Germany's trading interests in the Far East and should be shunned.³⁷ Some German firms were proving to be less than cooperative, either denying participation in the traffic or arguing that Mauser automatic pistols were "police protection weapons" or "sporting guns." German shipping companies earlier had insisted upon the legality of the trade, observing that all weapons shipments to China were required to obtain a special permit from a representative in Europe of the Chinese Maritime Customs.³⁸ Certain companies, such as Eduard Meyer & Co., Tientsin, and the *Deutsche Asiatische Bank*, even had the temerity to demand the intervention of German consular authorities in cases where arms consignments were intercepted by rival warlords, support which was consistently refused by the consulates on the ground that Germany formally had adhered to the May 1919 Arms Embargo.³⁹

Ironically, although the British had been party to the shipment of arms to the counter-revolutionary forces in Canton, in the autumn of

³⁷PA, *Waffen A: China*, I, AA to *Zweigstelle des Auswärtiges Amtes für Aussenhandel*, Leipzig, September 25, 1924.

³⁸*Ibid.*, *Wirtschaftsausschuss der Deutschen Reederei*, Hamburg, to AA (II F 820), March 18, 1924.

³⁹See *ibid.*, II, Boyé to AA, no No., *Anlage 1* (Eduard Meyer & Co. to Consulate-General Peking, February 4, 1925); *Anlage 2* (Eduard Meyer & Co. to Consulate-General Peking, February 7, 1925), February 14, 1925. See also *ibid.*, *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank* to Legation Peking, April 16, 1925. Because Germany had not adhered to the Embargo, the arguments of the private companies were legally and technically correct. It is interesting that in a similar situation (between March 1921 and March 1922 no legal basis existed to enforce an embargo on China), the United States State Department followed an evasive and non-committal policy in order to fulfill U.S. obligations under the 1919 agreement. See Atwater, 124-26.

1924 they requested the German government to prevent two shipments which had come to their attention from reaching China. These shipments stemmed originally from Switzerland and Czechoslovakia and were to be loaded on German steamers at Hamburg.⁴⁰ In this matter the Wilhelmstrasse decided to refuse the British request, since regulations imposed by the Allied Powers themselves placed limits on what Berlin could do in such cases. In replying, the Wilhelmstrasse pointed out that transit of arms through Germany was not forbidden by Article 170 of the Versailles Treaty. Moreover, both Article 321 of that instrument and the April 20, 1921 Barcelona Convention on Free Transit to which Germany recently had adhered⁴¹ obligated her to provide free transit of goods to both the Swiss and Czechs.⁴² Although it may have been satisfying to allude to the inability to meet the British request on the grounds of restrictions based on the Versailles settlement, the satisfaction could only have been brief. By 1925 China ranked first among the nations of the world as an importer of armaments and the lion's share of the traffic, based on the import statistics of the Chinese Maritime Customs, came from Germany.⁴³ The flow of foreign weapons through Germany to China was to become a major headache for the Wilhelmstrasse.

In Peking, Boyé arrived at the conclusion that the only course which would end the participation of German nationals in the trade was

⁴⁰PA, *Waffen A: China*, I, British Embassy Berlin to AA, no No. [II F 3750], November 11, 1924; [II F 3974], November 26, 1924.

⁴¹Germany adhered on October 4, 1923. On the Barcelona Conference on Communications, see Walters, 143, 179, and *passim*.

⁴²PA, *Waffen A: China*, AA to British Embassy (Berlin), n.d. [December, 1924].

⁴³See *infra*, note 53, and Appendix E.

to take legal measures in Germany barring German citizens anywhere from engaging in the Chinese arms business. He observed that it made not the slightest difference whether the traffic was legal in European terms or not, or whether the weapons were of "short or long range," or were styled "police protection arms" or not. As he put it, "not a week went by" without some mention in the East Asian press of German involvement in the arms traffic, whether it be participation of German firms, banks, or steamship companies, or simply that the weapons were originally of German provenance. These reports were spread throughout the world by Reuter or the United Press, and the British, French, and American press used each new occurrence to assert that the "German armaments trade" was indefinitely prolonging the Chinese civil war and encouraging the proliferation of bandits. (Much had been made of the fact that the Chinese bandits who held up the "Blue Express" in 1923 had been equipped with foreign arms.) Unfortunately, according to Boyé, the Chinese press was beginning to sound the same theme. Germany, he argued, had made at least a moral commitment to support the 1919 Arms Embargo, and the impression was growing among the Treaty Powers that Germany was evading her responsibilities in order unscrupulously to take advantage of the chaotic situation in China to turn a profit and increase her own influence. It was time, he continued, that Germany move to convince the world of her good will and reliability; if the authorities in Germany did not decide to conduct an energetic campaign against the traffic in weapons and smuggling, sooner or later they would

be obliged to do so by international intervention.⁴⁴

Although Boyé as usual overstated his case, the Wilhelmstrasse was fully sympathetic to his difficult task of preserving German honor and prestige in the face of a storm of press criticism. However, it could not move to assist him - it was caught in a dilemma. No far-reaching measures could be taken domestically without prejudicing Germany's position in the on-going negotiations with the Inter-Allied Control Commission. In the interest of supporting the domestic German weapons industry, the German government was maintaining that hand-weapons of 9 mm or smaller calibre did not constitute war material, and discussions were currently taking place in Geneva with the Allied Powers with a view to fixing a definition.⁴⁵

The problem of German arms traffic with China clearly demonstrates that the Wilhelmstrasse's policy toward China was subordinated to the wider aim of German foreign policy - the revision of Versailles. Actually, in this matter policy was not formulated in *Abteilung IV Ostasien*, but came under the jurisdiction of *Abteilung II-F (Abrüstungs- und Luftfahrtfragen)*, headed by *Ministerialdirektor* Dr. Köpke.⁴⁶ Köpke was of the

⁴⁴PA, *Waffen A: China*, II, Boyé to AA, no No., February 14, 1925; Boyé to AA, no No. (II F 1732), April 25, 1925. A campaign to stop the smuggling of arms from Hamburg to China already was under way. See the reports of the Hamburg Police President in *ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, Köpke to Legation Peking, No. 35, May 18, 1925. See also Salewski, 329ff. As a point of interest, Köpke was not quite certain whether Germany had formally adhered to the 1919 Arms Embargo or simply declared her willingness to do so. Boyé petulantly replied that although Germany had not formally adhered, he had repeatedly pointed out in his dispatches that she had committed herself morally in the 1922 discussions. *Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, no No. (II F 2130), May 23, 1925.

⁴⁶For the organizational steps which transformed the "*Friedensabteilung*" to "*Abteilung IVa - F, Referat IV*," and the jurisdiction of the latter, see Salewski, 68-69.

opinion that the unpleasant situation in which Boyé found himself was of no great importance. He expressed sympathy with the Minister's predicament, but asked him to bear with the state of affairs for the present in the interest of a more important consideration - the acceptance of Germany's definition of war matériel by the Control Commission. Once this was accepted, the problem in the Far East with regards to small arms weapons traffic would fall away. Germany would legally be able to manufacture and export such armaments and the press would let up on its hostile publicity.⁴⁷

Köpke's reasoning was flawed. The question of whether Germany could legally export small arms or not was not the issue either for the Treaty Powers or the press. The former were chiefly concerned with the interdiction of armaments which were thought to stoke the fires of civil war in China while the latter was motivated either by anti-German sentiments or a search for sensationalist copy. Nevertheless, the embarrassment and friction which German arms traffic caused the German diplomatic representative in China had to be tolerated until such time as Germany once more regained some freedom of action with regard to her national sovereignty.

Throughout 1925, while some other nations, such as Belgium, adhered to the 1919 agreement and passed domestic laws forbidding export of weapons of any description to China,⁴⁸ German firms and shipping companies were reported as continuing to play a major role in the continuing flow of arms to China, reportedly dealing not only in small

⁴⁷PA, *Waffen A: China*, II, Köpke to Legation Peking, No. 35, May 18, 1925.

⁴⁸*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, no No. (IV Chi 630), March 13, 1925.

arms and ammunition but in machine guns and field-pieces as well. Supposedly, even a number of motor-launches mounting cannon of German provenance were delivered.⁴⁹

Britain and the United States persisted in their efforts to tighten up the Embargo,⁵⁰ with the British government also passing further information to Berlin in expectation that the German government would move to terminate the activities of the German shipping companies.⁵¹ In September 1925, the regime in Peking announced another ban on the import of arms to China without the permission of the central authorities.⁵² Presumably designed to stem the flow of Soviet arms to the Kuomintang in the south, the ban was without noticeable effect. The German government, however, intent as it was on dismantling the Versailles restrictions, found it undesirable for the present to take any legal steps against the German nationals selling weapons to China.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, Legation Peking to AA, no No., *Anlage*, (Consulate Mukden [Kühlborn] report, May 25, 1925) (II F 2219), May 30, 1925; Legation Peking to AA, No. 2459, *Anlage*, (Consulate Tientsin [Betz] report, August 28, 1925) (II F 3317), August 31, 1925; *Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeines*, VIII, Consulate Harbin (Stohler) to AA, No. 165, May 21, 1927.

⁵⁰*FRUS* 1925, II, 641ff.

⁵¹*PA, Waffen A: China*, II, British Embassy Berlin to AA (II F 1048), March 17, 1925; British Embassy Berlin to AA (II F 2885), August 13, 1925.

⁵²*Ibid.*, Boyé to AA, No. 2517 (IV Chi 2054), September 8, 1925.

The statistics of the Chinese Maritime Customs for 1925⁵³ make it appear that in that year Germany dominated the market in weapons exports to China, possessing over one-half the market by value, a figure of about 13 million out of some 25 million Marks. These statistics however are misleading, since they reflected the Maritime Customs' standard practice of regarding the harbor of departure listed on the manifest as an indication of the country from which the goods originated. Since many non-German consignments were trans-shipped in German deep-sea ports, especially Hamburg, Germany's role in the arms traffic was thus artificially magnified. According to German statistics for 1925, the export of "non-forbidden" weapons, such as small arms and sporting weapons manufactured in Germany, amounted to only 1.8 million Marks.⁵⁴

⁵³*Ibid.*, Table (II F 4006) [compiled from the Chinese Maritime Customs statistics], December 26, 1926.

IMPORT OF WEAPONS AND MUNITIONS INTO CHINA IN 1925

<u>Country</u>	<u>Value</u>
Germany.....	3,813,644 HK Taels
Norway.....	1,278,855
Italy.....	1,014,333
Japan.....	420,899
Hongkong.....	211,957
Sweden.....	141,875
France.....	96,036
United States.....	77,999
Great Britain.....	67,050
French Indochina.....	46,402
Philippines.....	32,889
Netherlands.....	5,980
Korea.....	481
Switzerland.....	396
Canada.....	25
Total	7,208,821

⁵⁴*PA, Bu St.S.Chi*, II, Memo Trautmann, April 7, 1927. This figure applied to all exported small arms, whatever their destination.

Even though the Chinese statistics were not compiled until the end of 1926 (nor take into account the extensive smuggling of weapons) and are misleading in-so-far as *Germany's* role in the weapons traffic is concerned, they undoubtedly do reflect more accurately the involvement of *German nationals* in the trade. In any event, it was the view which the newspaper reading public of the world received and Germany's image suffered accordingly.⁵⁵

The problem arising from the transit of weapons through Germany from neighboring countries to China, which played such havoc with the statistics, continued to plague Germany through 1926. Germany now however had regained some freedom of movement to stem the flow if she so desired, for Article 321 of the Versailles Treaty had expired on January 10, 1925. Although concerned about the problem, the Wilhelmstrasse did not believe that legal proscription, even if not excluded by the Barcelona Convention, against the transit of Swiss and Czech armaments would serve the purpose. During 1925 and 1926, trade in armaments from Czechoslovakia to Greece had increased markedly with the shipments being transported through Germany and loaded at Nordenham, on the Weser. Attempts to shut off transit rights to China would only cause the Czechs to redirect all their arms shipments through Trieste, thereby adversely affecting the German railways and shipping companies and probably leading to increased difficulties in the already strained relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ See, e.g., the assertion in "Arms and the Chinaman," *New Statesman and Nation*, VII (May 12, 1934), 703, that the "history of the delivery of arms to China by Germany would fill not an article, but several large books" and that "German government officials were . . . heavily compromised in the supply of arms to China," cited in Johnsen, 156-58.

⁵⁶ *PA, Waffen A: China*, II, Memo Clodius (II F 1327), May 11, 1926.

It will be recalled that the civil war in China entered a new phase in the summer of 1926 with the launching of the Northern Expedition by Chiang Kai-shek. This and the continuance of anti-foreign incidents drew increased attention from the western powers, particularly Great Britain, to the arms traffic, and to Germany's role in it. Questions were asked in the House of Commons and there was apprehension, particularly at Geneva, that Germany was collaborating with Russia in the Bolshevisation of China.⁵⁷ These fears were groundless; during the ensuing troubled months, the Wilhelmstrasse strove to maintain a neutral attitude toward the various Chinese factions, but constant reports in the East Asian and European press about the continuing influx of German weapons shipments threatened to upset this policy.⁵⁸ In January 1927, renewed reports of German armaments shipped from Hamburg to Tsingtao and destined for the northern warlords now gave the impression in certain circles that Germany was tacitly supporting the anti-revolutionary forces. Such an impression was likely to cause serious agitation in China, severely affecting German trade in the south, and portending further complications with the Soviet Union. In Germany, the lead in the attack against the German government as an accomplice of reaction in China was taken by the Communist *Hamburger Volkszeitung*.⁵⁹

In order to defuse the developing suspicion about Germany's true attitude toward the revolution, Foreign Minister Stresemann at the end of March 1927 issued a public statement of neutrality toward the Chinese civil war. Unfortunately, simultaneously with this announcement

⁵⁷ Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 126.

⁵⁸ PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, IV, Consulate Tsingtao (Schirmer) to AA, No. 3 (IV Chi 87), January 11, 1927.

⁵⁹ Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 126.

came a press report of large shipments of arms destined for the *tuchlln* of Shantung. One of the transactions ostensibly was being handled by Carlowitz & Co., another by Eduard Meyer & Co. The latter shipment consisted of over 3000 cases of rifles and machine guns and an "enormous" amount of ammunition and was being transported by a German steamship of the Rickmers Lines.⁶⁰ Press reports of these shipments led Communist Deputies to charge in the *Reichstag* on April 5, 1927 that the government was conniving in the shipment of arms to the northern warlords,⁶¹ a charge subsequently denied by Foreign Minister Stresemann.

As a matter of fact the government had come to the conclusion at the end of 1926 that the time had now arrived to prohibit by law the shipment to China of arms of any type, including sporting guns, by German nationals.⁶² To this point, the China policy of the Wilhelmstrasse had reflected the balancing act of Stresemann - the "untiring effort"⁶³ to secure the withdrawal of the Inter-Allied Control Commission while at the same time maintaining a "low profile" in China. Now the air had cleared by the winding down of the long-standing dispute between Germany and the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris over the issue of German fulfillment of her disarmament obligations. Although the Conference of Ambassadors in December 1926 had reported adversely on the question of German export of semi-finished war matériel, the Allied Powers had agreed to withdraw the Inter-Allied Control Commission from Germany by the end of January

⁶⁰PA, *Bü St.S. Chi*, II, Boyé to AA, No. 88, March 25, 1927.

⁶¹Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Survey of International Affairs, 1928*, ed. by Arnold J. Toynbee (London, 1929), 395.

⁶²BA, R 43I/56, Memo, No. 283, January 14, 1927.

⁶³Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany*, 46.

1927, transferring responsibility for enforcing the disarmament clauses of Versailles to the Council of the League of Nations.⁶⁴ The dispute over German trade in certain war matériel also had been considered settled by January 31, 1927.⁶⁵ The termination of this problem then left the way open for the Wilhelmstrasse to attempt to put an end to the trade in armaments by German companies which supposedly acerbated the Chinese civil war.

A draft law prepared by the Foreign Ministry would have forbidden the transport of arms of any type or provenance destined for China by German shipping companies, and the involvement of German nationals in any manner in the arms traffic. But objections were raised by German businessmen, represented by the *Ostasiatischer Verein* and the *Verband Deutscher Reeder*, and they attempted to enlist support from the *Reichswehrministerium*.⁶⁶ The merchants "indignantly" rejected the interpretation put forward by the Wilhelmstrasse that the traffic was illegal and smacked of smuggling. They argued that a ban on German participation in the trade would be extraordinarily hard on Germany's position in China, not only because of the economic hardships it would pose for German firms but because it would constitute a form of intervention in China's domestic affairs; after all the Peking regime was

⁶⁴See John P. Fox, "Britain and the Inter-Allied Military Commission of Control, 1925-1926," *Journal of Contemporary History*, IV, No. 2 (1969), 143-64.

⁶⁵Salewski, 365ff.; *Survey of International Affairs, 1927*, 96ff.; Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany*, 70-71.

⁶⁶*Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv*, Freiburg i. Br. [hereafter cited as MA], 5892, *Marinearchiv* [hereafter cited as *Marine*] F VII c 7, VI, *Waffenhandel nach China*, OAV (Mohr) to Kapt.-z.-See Lohmann (Reichsmarineamt), March 8, 1927; and enclosure, OAV to AA of same date.

the internationally recognized government of China, a "sovereign" power. The most serious objection however, they said, was that legal prohibition would require legislation and debate in the *Reichstag*, a debate which the Communists would not hesitate to exploit in order to embarrass the government in the matter of illegal armaments. They did agree with the Wilhelmstrasse's contention that the whole business was damaging to Germany's international prestige and that a "gesture" had to be made, but suggested that any debate or legislation be avoided and that some sort of amiable and mutually satisfactory agreement be arrived at.⁶⁷

It is not quite clear what role the *Reichswehrministerium* played in the subsequent discussions between the Foreign Ministry and the shipping organizations although the military's interest in protecting arms exports to China became clearer later in the year. At any rate, the East Asia firms did agree in April 1927 to abstain voluntarily from transporting weapons to China from German harbors or on German vessels. No doubt the East Asia shipping companies were encouraged to accept this self-limitation by the publicity which the above-mentioned shipments had received and the debate which erupted in the *Reichstag* in early April about Communist charges of clandestine government support for the reactionary northern warlords. Likewise, the Wilhelmstrasse no doubt agreed to accept this "gentleman's agreement"⁶⁸ because of the arguments advanced by the shipping companies and presumably the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ This English phrase is used throughout the documents. A further reason why the shipping firms accepted this solution is that they thought that sufficient legal hindrances to trade in armaments were in prospect. The German government then was in the process of preparing a revised law on import and export of war matériel which was ultimately promulgated on July 27, 1927. *Reichsgesetzblatt* 1927, I, 239.

Reichswehr authorities. Whether or not the Wilhelmstrasse believed that this solution would be just as effective as legal proscription (as Stresemann told the *Reichstag*),⁶⁹ it made the decision to accept this half-way measure because it entailed the least difficulties and solved the problem faster than the introduction and passage of legislation.

The *Ostasiatischer Verein* professed to be convinced that strict neutrality was the only conceivable policy Germany could follow with respect to the Chinese civil war,⁷⁰ and for five months the agreement held, with only one violation (which fortunately did not become public) occurring.⁷¹ But in late summer 1927, reports of a further large shipment of arms from Czechoslovakia to northern warlord Chang Tso-lin threatened to overturn the accord. One of the larger firms announced its intention to terminate the agreement in view of the fact that foreign countries were still able to make use of German facilities denied to German firms to engage in the "lucrative" traffic. The shipment in question consisted of some 40,000 rifles with munitions from the Brno Small Arms Factory,⁷² which arrived at Hamburg early in September to be loaded on the Czech

⁶⁹PA, *Bll St. S. Chi*, II, Memo Trautmann, n.d. [*Marginalia* Schubert, "April 7, 1927 "]. (External evidence indicates that this memorandum formed the basis for Stresemann's reply to the *Reichstag* interpellation of April 5, 1927.) See also ADAP, B, IV, Doc. No. 247.

⁷⁰PA, *Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeines*, X, Note (re projected visit of Dr. March, Chairman of the OAV and Director of Carlowitz & Co., with State Secretary von Schubert), July 29, 1927.

⁷¹PA, *RM, 37 Chi*, I, Memo, January 25, 1928.

⁷²The Czechoslovakian government had a controlling interest in this arsenal.

steamer *Praga*.⁷³ In view of the dissatisfaction with the existing arrangement expressed by the shipping companies, the Wilhelmstrasse called a conference of German government officials and the interested private parties for September 3, 1927.⁷⁴

The conference made plain the dissatisfaction of the shipping companies with the "gentleman's agreement"⁷⁵ and brought up the question for the Wilhelmstrasse of finding some way to secure their continued observance of the promise to desist from arms trade with China. For their part, the firms had an answer; they requested legal measures prohibiting trans-shipment of armaments by foreign governments through German ports. The Wilhelmstrasse took alarm at the threat to repudiate the "gentleman's agreement," expecting that this might necessitate the introduction of legislation barring German companies from carrying arms consigned to China or in other ways participating in the China arms trade, a measure that was opposed by the Ministry of Economics and the *Reichswehr* and which because of its discriminatory nature undoubtedly would provoke a storm of protest in the *Reichstag*.⁷⁶ Another alternative was to prohibit the transit of arms from Czechoslovakia as requested by the shipping

⁷³PA, *Handakten, Ha Pol.: Ritter - China*, I, Minister Koch (Prague) to AA, No. 35, September 1, 1927; K pke to Legation Peking, No. 139 (IV Chi 2116), September 6, 1927; Protocol, no No., September 8, 1927.

⁷⁴MA, 5892, *Marine F VII & 7, VI*, AA to *Reichswehrministerium*, no No. (IV Chi 2080, Ang. III), September 1, 1927. This copy is in the files of *Marineleitung, V lkerbunds-Gruppe, Marine II*.

⁷⁵PA, *Handakten, Ha Pol.: Ritter - China*, I, Protocol, no No., September 8, 1927. This is the record of the conference which was chaired by Trautmann. The viewpoint of the German steamship companies was represented by Senator Strandes of Hamburg.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, K pke to Legation Peking, No. 139 (IV Chi 2116), September 6, 1927; Boy  to AA, No. 211, September 10, 1927.

companies, but the legality of such a measure was doubtful⁷⁷ as was its desirability because of the likely repercussions such a one-sided measure would have on Czech-German relations.⁷⁸

The question was thoroughly examined during the autumn of 1927, bringing the Wilhelmstrasse to the realization that the "gentleman's agreement" was inadequate in view of the loopholes which existed⁷⁹ and to the conclusion that the problem might best be approached from the other end; if international agreement with all states engaging in the selling or transporting of arms to China could be attained, domestic inter-department and political difficulties might be minimized. The most feasible way of reaching this agreement seemed to be to secure the adherence to the 1919 Arms Embargo of non-signatory European states engaged in the Chinese weapons trade, namely Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Switzerland, and Norway. Further, the Wilhelmstrasse wished to put an end to the participation in the trade of British insurance underwriters,

⁷⁷ Besides the Barcelona Agreement of 1920, the Elbe Navigation Act and the German-Czech Economic Agreement of 1920 also were possible obstacles. *PA, Blł St. S. Chi*, IV, "Geheime Aufzeichnung zum Entwurf eines Gesetzes über den Waffenhandel nach China," n.d. After discussions with other Ministries, a draft of a law was submitted with this memorandum to the Cabinet in March, 1928. See *BA, R 43 I/56*, Stresemann to *Staatssekretär in der Reichskanzlei* (IV Chi 528), March 19, 1928.

⁷⁸ *PA, Handakten, Ha Pol.: Ritter - China*, I, Memo Trautmann, September 16, 1927.

⁷⁹ The April "gentleman's agreement" left open the following possibilities:

- a) arms could be transported from German harbors on non-German vessels if the dealer was non-German or did not belong to the OAV;
- b) members of the OAV could ship arms to China from non-German harbors if they employed non-German vessels;
- c) members of the OAV could trans-ship arms through Germany for loading on non-German ships in non-German harbors.

the only ones willing to accept the great risks involved. Berlin accordingly instructed Boyé in December 1927 to announce to the Diplomatic Corps in Peking Germany's willingness to formally adhere to the 1919 Arms Embargo, and to propose its extension to non-member states.⁸⁰

The German government's intent at the end of 1927 to choke off the activities of German nationals in the China weapons trade was aided by a timely renewal of interest among the major Treaty Powers in strengthening the Arms Embargo. The renewed attention was the result of widely circulated press reports of the arrival of the *Praga* in Manila en route to China, and the off-loading at Tsingtao of 25,000 Mauser rifles for Chang Tso-lin from the Norwegian steamer *Skule*. The latter incident was especially disturbing to Berlin, for it demonstrated the total inadequacy of the "gentleman's agreement." Although the rifles were surplus war material of Belgium provenance, and had been shipped from Oslo, it emerged that two German firms, Siemssen and Carlowitz & Co., stood behind the transaction,⁸¹ a fact which, if it became public, could lead to serious agitation on the part of the Nationalists.

Unfortunately for Germany, the involvement of the two German firms did become public, leading the Kuomintang government at Nanking to threaten to seize the ships, to seal all offices of the two firms within their jurisdiction, and to prosecute for treason both the foreigners and Chinese involved.⁸² It was just such a development that Berlin had feared.

⁸⁰PA, *Bll St. S. Chi*, IV, Memo Trautmann, January 9, 1928.

⁸¹PA, RM, 37 *Chi*, I, Memo, January 25, 1928; *Bll St. S. Chi*, IV, Boyé to AA, No. 3, January 17, 1928; *Survey of International Affairs*, 1928, 395.

⁸²Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 129-30.

Germany's main interest in China was trade, and the device of the total boycott had often been used before by the southerners to bring pressure on foreign governments. Those German merchants in China who were not involved in the traffic now began to add their voices to the clamour at home to move against the arms traffic.

Boyé, taking advantage of the growing **concern** over the inadequacy of the existing embargo among the Treaty Powers, in early 1928 broached to various foreign representatives in Peking the question of extending the agreement by issuing invitations to non-signatory powers to adhere to the 1919 Arms Embargo. He found the Americans to be generally sympathetic in view of their long-standing campaign to enforce the ban, although they were concerned that the Nationalists now felt sufficiently independent and touchy to consider such a proposal an attempt at further restriction of China's sovereignty, perhaps causing a major incident along the lines of the 1926 uproar over German adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty.⁸³ Boyé saw the merit in this word of caution, but continued to sound out the other Ministers confidentially.

Interestingly enough, although the German initiatives remained sterile, concurrent interests of Japan led her to raise the same proposal. Trading interests in that country, alarmed at the large market in armaments that Czechoslovakia was winning in China and presumably as envious as their German counterparts, repeatedly solicited the Japanese

⁸³ *FRUS* 1928, II, 292-93, MacMurray to Kellogg, No. 1361 (Enclosure: Memorandum of conversation between Mayer [Counsellor of Embassy, Peking] and Boyé, January 17, 1928), January 19, 1928.

government to take steps to end the trade.⁸⁴ In February 1928, Japan proposed to the Powers that adhesion of non-signatory European states to the 1919 Arms Embargo be secured.⁸⁵ The motive was to stop shipments of arms to the northern warlords, a move that also dove-tailed with the independent policy the Tanaka Cabinet was following during the latter part of 1927 and early 1928 of cultivating Chiang Kai-shek and the moderate Nationalists in order to increase Japanese influence in China.⁸⁶ The United States, although not as yet convinced of the viability of the Nationalist movement,⁸⁷ accepted the Japanese suggestion, and subsequently discussion began within the Peking Diplomatic Body with a view to extending participation in the Arms Embargo.⁸⁸

On the same day that Boyé publicly declared the readiness of the German government to adhere formally to the Embargo (February 21, 1928),⁸⁹ the Wilhelmstrasse, having finally lost patience with what appeared to be duplicity among the German firms and in accord with its announced policy of ending German involvement in the traffic, sent a sharp note to the *Ostasiatischer Verein*. Information had been received

⁸⁴PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, IV, Solf (Embassy Tokyo) to AA, No. 28, March 16, 1928. This information was passed confidentially to Solf by the Japanese Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.

⁸⁵FRUS 1928, II, 294, MacVeagh (Ambassador to Japan) to Kellogg, No. 12, February 13, 1928.

⁸⁶Iriye, 142ff.

⁸⁷The fragmentation of the Nationalist camp, the break with the Communist and Soviet Advisors, and the brief departure of Chiang Kai-shek at the end of 1927 should be recalled.

⁸⁸FRUS 1928, II, 294ff.

⁸⁹Statement by Sir Austen Chamberlain in the House of Commons on March 28, 1928. Quoted in *Survey of International Affairs*, 1928, 395.

by Berlin of two further shipments of arms destined for the northern warlords in which German firms were said to be involved. If this information proved correct, the Wilhelmstrasse "urgently advised" the OAV to take steps to have the vessels recalled. In any event, the association was informed peremptorily, a law for the suppression of German involvement in the weapons trade was currently in preparation.⁹⁰ Undoubtedly the Wilhelmstrasse had been encouraged to return to the idea of legislation by a series of Chinese protests, including threats by the Nationalist Commissioner of Foreign Affairs during the first two months of 1928 to move against German companies and trade within the jurisdiction of the Nanking government.⁹¹ It will be recalled that throughout 1927, Germany had been pursuing a course of "meticulous neutrality" toward the Chinese revolution, a policy now endangered if the weapons traffic from Germany did not cease.

The decision to take domestic legal steps undoubtedly was correct, for even though diplomatic efforts were continued,⁹² the attempt to solve the problem by international agreement among the Treaty Powers ultimately

⁹⁰PA, *Bull St.S. Chi*, IV, copy of Note (IV Chi 348), February 21, 1928. Internal evidence indicates that this document was sent to the OAV. The gist of this warning also was released to the press through W.T.B. on February 24, 1928.

⁹¹*Ibid.* See also Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 129.

⁹²Even prior to the Japanese initiative in February, the German and British governments had discussed the problem of the flow of arms from German ports to China. During the next few months, the British, agreeing that a transit ban on Czech weapons through Germany would be extremely difficult in view of the latter's international commitments and probably would not affect the China situation anyway as it would merely redirect the traffic through Poland or Trieste, exerted pressure on the Czechs to cease providing armaments to combatants in the Chinese civil war. See PA, *Bull St. S. Chi*, IV, Memo [Trautmann?], January 30, 1928; Memo, February 25, 1928; Note, March 20, 1928; Sthamer (Ambassador to London) to AA, No. 236, March 29, 1928; Memo Trautmann, March 31, 1928.

failed.⁹³ During February and March 1928, the Wilhelmstrasse attempted to secure the agreement of other Ministries to legislation which would put an end to the troublesome arms traffic. It seems that initially the strongest objections came from the Ministry of Economics which rejected the Foreign Ministry's first draft for a "China Weapons-Trade" law on the grounds that the repercussions would both economically and financially be detrimental to German industry and trade.⁹⁴ Certain offices within the *Reichswehrministerium* also had reservations. The *Truppenamt* (the concealed General Staff) initially objected that the shutting off of arms trade with China by legislation could be harmful to Germany's weapon industry,⁹⁵ but its argument was theoretical rather than concrete and its opposition was not strongly held. After minor changes in the wording of the proposed law, the *Truppenamt* agreed to accept the new draft, although (observing that it did not put much significance in the matter) it thought that the clause requiring a special permit for

⁹³The Diplomatic Body in Peking, unable to achieve the unanimous adherence of all powers involved in the weapons trading with China as required by the Czechs as a condition of their adherence, limited itself to dispatching identical telegrams to their respective governments calling attention to the 1919 Arms Embargo in the present Chinese turmoil, and suggesting that all nations should adhere to the agreement. This statement of principle was made public on March 10, 1928. See *FRUS 1928*, II, 296-97, Mayer (*chargé d'affaires* in Peking) to Kellogg, No. 119, February 23, 1928; *PA, Bli St. S. Chi*, IV, "Denkschrift zum Entwurf eines Gesetzes über den Waffenhandel nach China," no No., n.d. Soviet adherence was also not considered likely in view of the difficulties currently troubling Sino-Russian relations. Nevertheless, Japan invited the Soviet Union on March 1, 1928 to adhere to the 1919 Arms Embargo, an invitation that was refused at the end of the month. *FRUS 1928*, II, 298ff.

⁹⁴*MA*, 5892, *Marine F VII c 7*, VI, *Wehrmachts-Abt. to Truppenamt*, No. 149/28 g. W, March 9, 1928.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, *Truppenamt* Memo (signed Frhr. von Fritsch), No. 88/28 g. T.A. *Stab*, March 1, 1928.

the export of sporting weapons should be modified in inter-Ministry negotiations.⁹⁶ The *Wehrmachtsabteilung* under Colonel Schleicher (which was not subordinate to the *Truppenamt* but directly under the Minister)⁹⁷ was more vehement in echoing the *Truppenamt*'s concern for Germany's defense capacity, arguing that preventing armament sales to China could adversely affect the small-caliber weapons industry by closing off a potential market,⁹⁸ an argument that reflected the *Reichswehr* policy of generally supporting current armament production capacity.⁹⁹

Although the Wilhelmstrasse had resolved to take firmer measures in the matter of the China arms trade only after the removal of the obstacle posed by the presence of the Inter-Allied Control Commission as well as the satisfactory ending of the negotiations with the Conference of Ambassadors, elements of the military were not convinced that the restoration of German sovereignty with regard to small-arms was sufficient reason to offer such an opportunity for "mischief" to the Allies. The *Wehrmachts-Abt.* argued that the Allies would seize upon the introduction of such legislation as German admission of illegal arms dealings with China, and perhaps use this as an excuse to reopen the question of

⁹⁶*Ibid.*, *Truppenamt* Memo (signed von Blomberg), No. 225/28 g. T. 1 VII, March 8, 1928.

⁹⁷Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 296-97.

⁹⁸MA, 5892, *Marine F VII c 7, VI, Wehrmachts-Abt. to Truppenamt*, No. 149/28 g. W, *Anlage 1 (RWM-Wehrmachts-Abt. to AA, 149/28 W (signed von Schleicher), March 8, 1928), March 9, 1928.*

⁹⁹Carroll, 59-66.

armament restrictions.¹⁰⁰

Notwithstanding these objections, the Wilhelmstrasse proceeded with its intent to legislate against the arms trade. After submission of the matter to the Cabinet on March 19,¹⁰¹ a bill was introduced in the *Reichstag* which passed into law without apparent difficulty on March 31, 1928.¹⁰² The Wilhelmstrasse's course was assisted by the publicity given to the traffic since the renewal of the Northern Expedition early in 1928 and further aided by the stiffening of German public opinion as the result of the seizure by the Kiel police of seventeen truckloads of German arms in transit to China.¹⁰³

The "China Weapons-Trade Act" prohibited German nationals, whatever their domicile, from engaging in the arms trade with China. The law was fixed at a duration of one year, expiring on May 1, 1929, but could be terminated at any time or extended by the government in agreement with the *Reichsrat*. Within the next few months the British government also managed to attain agreement from the British insurance underwriters association not to insure consignments of arms for China,

¹⁰⁰MA, 5892, *Marine F VII c 7, VI, Wehrmachts-Abt. to Truppenamt*, No. 149/28 g. W, *Anlage 1 (RWM-Wehrmachts-Abt. to AA, 149/28 W (signed von Schleicher)*, March 8, 1928), March 9, 1928. Schleicher observed caustically that even if the "experts" of the Foreign Ministry maintained Germany's legal right in this area, this was a *Machtfrage* for which legal assurances were not sufficient.

¹⁰¹BA, R 43/56I, Stresemann to *Staatssekretär in der Reichskanzlei* (IV Chi 528), March 19, 1928. I have not been able to find any further inter-Ministerial documentation on the subject, but in view of the *Truppenamt*'s attitude, presumably the matter was settled at the Cabinet level.

¹⁰²*Reichsgesetzblatt 1928, I, "Gesetz über den Waffenhandel nach China vom 31. März 1928," 149.* For a contemporary defense of the necessity of this law and the German government's good faith in attempting to stem the weapons trade with China, see "Deutschland und der Waffenhandel nach China," *Europäische Gespräche*, V (1928), 213-16.

¹⁰³*Survey of International Affairs, 1928, 396.*

an undertaking that subsequently was joined by the major marine insurance companies of the world, including those of Czechoslovakia.¹⁰⁴

No sooner had the the Wilhelmstrasse ended the long-standing threat to its policy of maintaining a "low profile" in China than the situation in that country changed drastically. In the spring of 1928, Chiang Kai-shek, once more at the head of the reunited Nationalist forces, resumed the Northern Expedition and overthrew the northern warlords. By August, Germany had entered treaty relations with the Nanking government. Now the law prohibiting weapons trade with China threatened to become a liability in cementing relations with the new regime.

As the date of expiry approached (May 1, 1929), the German government was faced with the question of whether the law should be extended or simply allowed to lapse. The former alternative might have been interpreted by the Nationalist government as an unfriendly act, yet Germany did not dare to let the law expire without first determining the attitude of the Treaty Powers to the still-in-force Arms Embargo. Inquiries were made in London, Tokyo, and Washington whether now that "a government in effective control of the whole country" existed, the Treaty Powers were prepared to lift the 1919 Embargo.¹⁰⁵ Upon receiving

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵*PA, Bul St. S. Chi*, IV, Schubert to Prittwitz (Embassy Washington), no No., April 5, 1929; Schubert to Embassy London, No. 120, April 5, 1929; *FRUS 1929*, II, 526-27, Memo Stimson, April 8, 1929. Of course, "effective control" had not been accomplished by the Nationalists, but the Treaty Powers lifted the Embargo as a result of its general ineffectiveness in preventing arms and munitions from reaching China. Atwater, 139.

assurance that this indeed was intended,¹⁰⁶ Germany informed the Nanking government that its "China Weapons-Trade Act" would be permitted to lapse on April 30, 1929.¹⁰⁷ The 1919 Arms Embargo was also terminated on April 26, 1929.¹⁰⁸

As the foregoing account makes clear, the Wilhelmstrasse's policy of maintaining a "low profile" in China was buffeted by the winds of public opinion. Not only the exaggerated attention paid by the international press to the arms traffic, but the effort of the Treaty Powers, led by the United States and Britain, to impose an arms embargo on China was symptomatic of the war-weary decade after 1919. The China Arms Embargo, like the Geneva Protocol or the Kellogg-Briand Pact, was an attempt to give multilateral legal and moral expression to the distaste for military conflict as a means of settling disputes. The idea that the Chinese conflict would soon die away for lack of armaments reflected not only the simplistic belief that arms *per se* led to conflict, but a denial of the social and economic realities of the rise of Chinese nationalism. It seems significant that the Embargo did not make any distinction between the Peking government, the warlords, or the Nationalist movement.

Furthermore, the policy of embargoing armaments to China pursued by the United States and Britain betrayed not only the belief in the

¹⁰⁶PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, IV, Schubert to Embassy Tokyo, no No., April 14, 1929; Schubert to Embassy Washington, No. 138, April 14, 1929; *FRUS* 1929, II, No. 528, Memo Stimson, April 18, 1929.

¹⁰⁷PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, IV, Schubert to Boyé, No. 147 (zu IV Chi 335), April 18, 1929.

¹⁰⁸*FRUS* 1929, II, 529-30, Senior Minister in China (Oudendijk) to Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs (C. T. Wang), n.d.[April 26, 1929].

necessity of achieving a new framework of international relations in the Far East, a framework which excluded "particularist" policies pursued at the expense of China,¹⁰⁹ but also the utopian hope that nations would submerge national interests in order to assist China to work out her internal problems herself and ultimately be accepted as an international equal. Admittedly, in the case of the Embargo, there was a precedent for concerted action by the Treaty Powers in the pre-war "diplomacy of imperialism" system. Yet, the major difference lay in the fact that it was hoped that China would be able to take her place in the new order once her internal difficulties were overcome.¹¹⁰

It is significant that nowhere in the relevant German documents can be found an echo of the rationale which guided the Arms Embargo of the Western Powers. The Wilhelmstrasse's China policy in this as in other matters was guided solely by *raison d'état*. Berlin regarded adherence to the embargo as a device to avoid hostile reactions from any of the Chinese camps and to reduce the possibility of friction with the Entente Powers, the same reasons which made the publicity given the German involvement in the arms traffic uncomfortable. Joining the arms embargo, as advocated strenuously by Boyé, was seen as a step in ending German isolation in the Far East. Never were arguments expressed by German officials that arms were instrumental in the continuation of civil

¹⁰⁹Iriye, 11.

¹¹⁰After recognition of the general ineffectiveness of the Embargo had led to its cancellation in 1929, the United States continued to pursue its aim of preventing civil strife in China by prohibiting all arms exports to China except those authorized by the Nationalists. Atwater, 141. It is significant that the same policy was not followed with regard to the Peking governments.

strife in China or that Germany should subordinate her national interests to a higher international morality.

Nevertheless, the publicity directed on the traffic was highly embarrassing to Berlin's attempt to shape a new image. However, fortunately, the issue did not become acute until after the emergence of a discernible civil war after 1925. Initially, the Wilhelmstrasse found it necessary to subordinate the policy of avoiding controversy in China to the more important aim of regaining a degree of sovereignty in the disarmament problem. But after this issue had been settled, the German government decided late in 1926 to take steps to end the arms traffic carried on by German nationals. Initially the government determined on legal proscription, but was dissuaded by the shipping and trading interests. It was only after the merchants had demonstrated their unwillingness to police themselves in the interest of long-term Sino-German trade that the government put legal measures into effect.

In-so-far as the relationship between Weimar clandestine rearmament and the China arms traffic is concerned, it seems that any connection was indirect and minimal. Similarly, on the basis of available evidence it is very tenuous to try to link the decision to legally prohibit the participation of German nationals in the arms trade with China to Stresemann's knowledge of *Reichswehr* activities in the armaments fields. It seems clear that the German military took no direct interest in the China situation until after the restoration (or at least apparent restoration) of an effective government in that country and the beginning of a Nationalist interest in purchasing weapons and hiring advisors from Germany. From this perspective, it does not seem surprising that the Foreign Ministry easily overrode the *Truppenamt's*

theoretical objections to ending the China weapons traffic. A few months after the expiration of the "China Weapons-Trade Act" however, certain elements in the *Reichswehr* did develop an interest in enlarging Sino-German contacts in the sphere of armament trade.

The passing of the "China Weapons-Trade Act" and the later triumph of the Kuomintang led to the hope in the Wilhelmstrasse that the problem had been satisfactorily concluded. However, the Nationalists were unable to achieve absolute mastery over the country, and soon the issue of German firms selling weapons to parties in opposition to Nanking would appear. Further, the Nanking authorities themselves initiated a policy of relying heavily upon German sources for their arms supplies. Nevertheless, the Wilhelmstrasse's policy toward China remained constant - the furtherance of trade relations with that country and the attempt to avoid international controversy. Even after the appearance in China of the strong central government which Berlin had hoped for opened up the possibility of enlarged trade relations in the sphere of armaments, the Wilhelmstrasse continued to oppose such trade. This fact demonstrates that of prime importance was the maintenance of a "low profile" in China. The image which Germany presented to the western powers had to take precedence over any favor which might be won with Nanking by cooperating in armament sales.

The China weapons trade then had been a minor thorn in Germany's overall policy and one which was difficult to deal with because of European complications stemming from the Versailles settlement. Regrettably for the Wilhelmstrasse, no sooner had this embarrassing issue apparently been settled in 1928 when a similarly emotional issue appeared with the arrival in China of Colonel Max Bauer and his German military advisory staff.

CHAPTER V

THE REAPPEARANCE OF GERMAN MILITARY ADVISORS IN CHINA

1919-1927

After the conclusion of the 1921 Sino-German Treaty, the Wilhelmstrasse viewed with concern the frequent and widely circulated press reports, some accurate and some spurious, concerning German nationals taking up advisory positions in a military capacity in China. Aside from the insatiable demand of the press for sensationalist copy, such activities attracted the attention of the international news services because of the apparent violations of Germany's obligations under the Versailles Treaty. By Article 179 Germany was required:

. . . not to accredit nor send to any foreign country any military, naval or air mission, nor allow any such mission to leave her territory, and Germany further agrees to take appropriate measures to prevent German nationals from leaving her territory to become enrolled in the Army, Navy or Air Service of any foreign Power, or to be attached to such Army, Navy or Air Service for the purpose of assisting in the military, naval or air training thereof, or otherwise for the purpose of giving military, naval or air instruction in any foreign country.¹

Since World War II, the extent to which the *Reichswehr* violated both the spirit and the letter of this restriction, particularly with

¹The Treaty of Peace between the Allied & Associated Powers and Germany Signed at Versailles, June 28, 1919. It is interesting that in an annotated version of the Versailles Treaty prepared in October 1943 by order of President Roosevelt with a view to the prospective end of World War II, Germany was charged with violating this article with respect to her post-war military missions in Argentina, Columbia, El Salvador, and China (Nanking). *FRUS 1919, The Paris Peace Conference*, XIII, 333.

regard to Soviet Russia,² has become well-known, though there were some attempts by other branches of the German government to keep these violations from getting out of hand. For example, on October 20, 1919, the Ministry of Interior issued an ordinance requiring competent *Land* passport authorities to deny exit permission to *Reich* nationals going abroad with the intent, admitted or not, of taking up military service in foreign states. Further, in questionable cases, Berlin was to be informed of the particulars so that if required appropriate measures could be taken to prevent the departure.³ Henceforth, it became the practice in suspicious cases to require a written declaration obligating the traveller not to accept military service with any foreign government.⁴

Such regulations obviously had little preventive value in cases involving determined men, or where the authorities were willing to look the other way. This was especially true when the individuals involved were men who looked with contempt upon the Versailles Treaty and the Republic, men who often could expect to find a good deal of sympathy within the ranks of the bureaucracy. At any rate, no German government in the Weimar period specifically promulgated laws forbidding German

²See, esp., Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, *passim*; Hans W. Gatzke, "Russo-German Military Collaboration during the Weimar Republic," *The American Historical Review*, LXII, No. 3 (April, 1958), 565-97; Erickson, 144-63, 247-92.

³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 OA: *Generalia*, I, Memorandum [on the possibility of German officers and civil servants entering into the service of foreign states] (e.o. S. O. 318/27), May 3, 1927. The original of this memorandum is in Po 13 Siam: *Militärangelegenheiten*, suggesting that there might have been some question in 1927 of German military advisors taking up service in that country.

⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 OA: *Generalia*, I, Memorandum (e.o. S.O. 318/27), May 3, 1927.

nationals from entering the military employ of foreign states.⁵ It is likely that no such prohibition was enacted because it would have signified formal acceptance of the Versailles limitations on German sovereignty and might thus have engendered domestic political controversy.

Nevertheless, legal machinery did exist which could have been employed by a German government to hinder German ex-officers from accepting foreign service. For instance, on the basis of Article 28 of the *Reichs- und Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetzes* of 1913⁶ a German national could be deprived of his citizenship if he did not obey a command of the German government to resign from the armed services of a foreign power. Secondly, an ex-officer's pension could be interrupted, although it would have to be reactivated upon his return from abroad providing he "could not be reproached for violating his patriotic duty." And, finally, misrepresentation to the passport authorities as to the purpose of going abroad was punishable by law.⁷

Although after the normalization of relations with China the Wilhelmstrasse consistently opposed German military advisors taking up service in that country, it never attempted to bring these legal measures to bear and limited itself to admonitions and requests for cooperation.

⁵*Ibid.*, Dieckhoff to Consulate-General Bombay, no No., October 22, 1932. There seems to have been some confusion in the Foreign Ministry about the restrictions of Article 179. Dieckhoff, while opposing the entry of some local German nationals into an auxiliary force in Bombay as a matter of policy, stated that Article 179 applied only to *Reich* military missions and not to individual German nationals!

⁶*Reichsgesetzblatt* 1913, 583.

⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 OA: *Generalia*, Memorandum (e.o. IV S.O. 318/27), May 3, 1927.

Aside from the likelihood of provoking domestic political controversy, the Wilhelmstrasse professed to see legal difficulties in applying the provisions of Article 179 to German nationals serving abroad as "advisors." Moreover, applying the measures to the China advisors would set an undesirable legal precedent: there were certain countries, notably in South America, where military advisors were useful for Germany's economic policies. Whatever the reasons and excuses, the Versailles definition was clear, and the fact remains that the Wilhelmstrasse never attempted to make use of the existing legal restrictions in either the sense or the spirit of Article 179.

There certainly was no dearth of incidents during the 1920's involving German nationals entering Chinese military employment. German ex-officers were in high demand in China, as the numerous factions in the country maneuvered for power in the interminable intrigues and civil wars. German officers long since had established their reputation in the Far East; ever since the German Wars of Unification the recognized prowess of Prussia and later Germany had made her a natural source of expertise for nations in the process of westernizing and modernizing their armed forces.⁸ The two major nineteenth century pioneers in building China's modern armies, Li Hung-chang and Chang Chih-tung, had employed German military instructors to introduce the fundamentals of Western military science to China. One of Li Hung-chang's advisors,

⁸For example, across the Japan Sea, General Klemens Wilhelm Jakob Meckel and other German officers had gradually supplanted the French advisory staff and played a major role in shaping the modernizing Meiji army. See Ernst L. Presseisen, *Before Aggression: Europeans Prepare the Japanese Army* (Tucson, Arizona, 1965), *passim*.

Major Constantin von Hanneken,⁹ had been instrumental in the formation of the so-called "Pacification Army," essentially a brigade-sized formation which formed the nucleus for the later Peiyang Army and Peiyang clique. The Pacification Army came under the command of Yüan Shih-k'ai in December 1895 and Yüan continued to make extensive use of German officers to train his troops,¹⁰ thus laying the groundwork for extensive acceptance of German military thought in China prior to the First World War.¹¹

Not only did German military organization and concepts win acceptance in China, but many influential political figures of the early 1920's actually had their roots in Yüan's German-trained brigade. The following selective list illustrates the high positions which were

⁹Hanneken, a former Prussian artillery officer, first travelled to China in 1880. He became advisor to Li Hung-chang when the latter was Viceroy of Chihli and was entrusted with the development and fortification of Port Arthur, China's most important naval base. After fighting meritoriously and being wounded in the Sino-Japanese War (for which he received the Chinese rank of general), Hanneken returned to Germany. Shortly before the Boxer Rebellion, he again went to China where he organized the Ching Hsing Mining Corporation. He was expelled in 1919 as a result of Allied pressure, but returned in 1920 as chief engineer of the Ching Hsing Coal Mines until his death in 1925. See Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, ix-x; Ralph S. Powell, *The Rise of Chinese Military Power, 1895-1912* (Princeton, 1955), 71-72; Schrecker, 9; and *FRUS 1894*, Appendix 1, 44-47.

¹⁰Powell, *Chinese Military Power*, 75-81, and *passim*; Ch'en, *Yuan Shih-k'ai*, 48ff. Schrecker's claim, 201-203, that when Governor of Shantung in 1901 Yüan Shih-k'ai "initiated the [nationalistic] effort to avoid hiring German personnel" in civilian capacities does not alter this statement. Subsequent Governors of Shantung, notably Chou Fu (1902-1904), "reversed" Yüan's policy and began again the practice of employing Germans in civilian and military capacities in Shantung Province. It was during Yang Shih-hsiang's tenure as Governor of Shantung (1905-1907) that German nationals lost their predominance among the foreign advisors in Tsinan. See Schrecker, 149-53, 201-203, and *passim*. The Chinese "nationalistic" efforts to limit German influence in Shantung Province does not of course diminish the influence of German military thought in China at large or even with the officials in Shantung.

¹¹Powell, *Chinese Military Power*, 75-79, and *passim*; Schrecker, 11.

filled by former officers of this unit:¹²

Chang Hsün	..... Military Governor (or warlord) of Kiangsu
Ch'en Kuang-yüan	..... Military Governor of Kiangsi
Feng Kuo-chang	..... Acting President, 1917-1918
Hsü Shih-ch'ang	..... President, 1918-1922
Ts'ao K'ün	..... President, 1923-1924
Tuan Ch'i-jui	..... Premier, 1916; leader Anfu clique; Provisional Chief Executive, 1924-1926

Another of the great military modernizers under the Manchus, Chang Chih-tung, after taking over the post of Governor-General at Nanking, expanded the so-called "Self-strengthening Army" by borrowing German military techniques. Just as in Yüan's "Newly Created Army"¹³ and other military units (notably the "Tenacious Army" of Chihli), the Self-strengthening Army was heavily influenced by German military thought, being based on German tables of organization, following German training regulations, drill formations, and communications procedures as well as employing thirty-five German commissioned and non-commissioned officers as advisors and officers.¹⁴ Further evidence of the large, indeed paramount, influence of German military thought could be adduced by

¹²Powell, *Chinese Military Power*, 79-80. I have included only the more important political figures of the twenty-five ex-officers listed by Powell.

¹³The Pacification Army was renamed the "Newly Created Army" shortly before Yüan assumed command.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 60-64. Chang proposed increasing the size and western practices of the Self-strengthening Army and planned to continue using westerners as officers as well as advisors, a unique feature of this force. The Throne's conservatism led to his replacement in 1896 by Liu K'un-i. Following the change in commanders, increased friction between the Self-strengthening Army and Liu's Hunan troops led to his termination of the German officers' service in 1898. Furthermore, a clash between the two armies causing the death of a German corporal had resulted in the appearance of two German gunboats, thereby demonstrating the "danger of political intervention inherent in the employment of foreign officers." See *ibid.*, 67-68.

multiplying examples of German officers serving with military units or as instructors in military training schools, such as the new military academy at Nanking.¹⁵ In addition, Chinese officers were sent to Germany for military instruction. Finally, the indirect penetration of German military thought as the result of the education of Chinese officers in Japan, a country itself largely indebted to Germany for her military practices, contributed to the paramount influence of Germany in the modern military development of China.¹⁶

It is not therefore surprising that despite the defeat of Germany in the First World War, German military advisors continued to be in demand in China as well as elsewhere.¹⁷ This fact is a tribute not only to the intimate and long-standing German-Chinese collaboration in military matters, but also to the commanding reputation that Germany had attained in the military arts throughout the world. Whatever accounted for the popularity of the vanquished in other countries,¹⁸ in-so-far as China is concerned one cannot discount the obvious advantage derived from taking military advisors from a nation which had relinquished extraterritoriality. It is significant that prior to the return in 1928 of the German advisors,

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

¹⁶ Powell, *Chinese Military Power*, 339, concludes that German and Japanese military influence during the Manchu period underlay the characteristic post-war faith in military as opposed to civil authority and the development of a new military mentality distinct from the previous humanistic political philosophy of Confucius.

¹⁷ Alfred Vagts, *Defense and Diplomacy: The Soldier and the Conduct of Foreign Relations* (New York, 1956), 204ff.; Kurt von Borcke, *Deutsche unter fremden Fahnen* (Berlin, 1938), 292ff.

¹⁸ Vagts, 204, argues that their employers were convinced that the Germans learned more from defeat than the Allies from victory.

the Chinese Nationalists had relied for military advice on the Soviet Union, another country which stood outside the "Unequal Treaty" system.

The loss of the war and the reduction of the German army to conform more closely to the 100,000 man figure stipulated by the Versailles Treaty, left large numbers of German officers without outlet at home for their talents. Here was a ready-made pool of expertise which could be tapped, and certainly the more venturesome sought to make use of their training and experience abroad in the service of foreign governments. Yet, although a large number of experienced officers were available and Germany's military reputation with the Chinese survived the war intact, relatively few officers went to China during the early 1920's. Aside from the Versailles restrictions and the turbulent conditions in Germany, the breakdown of central government in China and the emergence of warlord regimes, most with grave financial difficulties, made accepting employment in China a risky business during these years.

An additional factor which must be taken into consideration when discussing German military advisors abroad during the 1920's, is the high incidence of right-radicalism in their political views, a factor not without significance in considering the German military advisors in China, particularly their relationship with the right-wing Kuomintang. A significant proportion of the German ex-officers who secured foreign posts during these years had demonstrated their hostility to the new Germany by participating in various anti-Republican activities in the tumultuous years following the creation of the Weimar Republic. Many had links with ultra-nationalistic and right-extremist groups. Among the more famous were Wilhelm Faupel who organized a *Freikorps* in Silesia in 1919 and later entered into Argentinian and Peruvian service (a background

which served him well as Hitler's representative in 1936 to Franco); Hans Kundt who assisted in crushing the Bavarian Soviet Republic and later took service with the Bolivian government; Ernst Röhm who also found outlet for his talents in Bolivia after the "Beer-Hall Putsch" and was called back in 1930 by Hitler to take over the *S.A. (Sturmabteilung)*; and of course Max Bauer and Hermann Kriebel (of whom more below) who entered the service of the Chinese Nationalists.¹⁹

The well-known antipathy of these individuals for the democratic nature of the Weimar Republic created a double-barrelled problem for the Wilhelmstrasse. Not only was Germany bound by Article 179 to prevent German ex-officers from accepting employment abroad in a military capacity, but the press attention which these individuals attracted because of their right-wing extremist and militaristic views caused domestic controversy as well.

In the period immediately following the First World War and prior to the conclusion of the Sino-German Treaty of 1921, the Wilhelmstrasse (or more precisely, its East Asia desk) pursued a forward policy with regard to the employment of German military advisors in China. It appears that the Wilhelmstrasse at this juncture hoped to strengthen German influence in Chinese governing circles through the agency of private persons. Such a policy would aid German endeavors to end the state of war which existed between the two countries until the conclusion of the 1921 Treaty (and further resumption of German trade which, as we have seen, underlay the diplomatic activity of 1920-1921).

¹⁹It is interesting that in Borcke's account which was published during the Third Reich (1938), Kundt and Friedrich Scherlau, both active in Bolivia, have chapters devoted to their activities, while Ernst Röhm is no so much as mentioned: apparently he had become a "non-person."

Although this policy did not flagrantly violate the Versailles military clauses (in the sense that no official "military mission" was involved), it did contradict both the letter and the spirit of the Versailles restrictions regarding the employment abroad in a military capacity of German nationals.

According to some historians, the Wilhelmstrasse had adopted a policy of adhering to the military restrictions at this time while working through diplomatic channels to ameliorate the treaty terms.²⁰ If this be true, one must surmise that higher officials in the Foreign Ministry were not aware of the scheme promoted during the summer of 1920 by *Ministerialdirektor* Knipping (chief of the East Asia desk). The affair speaks volumes with regard to the ability of lower echelons of the bureaucracy to make decisions involving policy which could have wider implications.

It will be recalled that the struggle for power in North China was at its peak during these years resulting in a bewildering kaleidoscope of cabinets in Peking. By 1919, one of the more powerful individuals in the dog-fight was Hsü Shu-cheng,²¹ member of the Anfu clique and close confidant of occasional Premier Tuan Ch'i-jui. Hsü had been head of Li Yüan-hung's Cabinet Secretariat in 1916 and had advanced steadily in political influence, culminating in November 1919 in his appointment as "Commissioner to Prepare for the Defense of the Northwest Frontier" and "Commander of the Frontier Defense Army" (as

²⁰Salewski, 79. Salewski has in mind mainly relations with the Inter-Allied Military Control Commission and the negotiations with the Entente. It seems self-evident however that the clause regarding military advisors must have been included in this general policy.

²¹"Little Hsü," not to be confused with Hsü Shih-ch'ang, Peiyang elder statesman, President since October 10, 1918, and opponent of Hsü Shu-cheng.

the 1917 "War Participation Army" was now named). Hsü's military power was based on these posts, on his position as High Commissioner to Outer Mongolia, and on his alliance with the famous Fengtien warlord, Chang Tso-lin.²² During the winter of 1919-1920, Hsü Shu-cheng and his Anfu clique was a major force in the politics of North China and well worth cultivating.

With this background in mind, it is not surprising that Knipping took advantage of an opportunity to secure influence in Hsü's camp, presumably with a view to easing the task of the German negotiating team then attempting in Peking to reestablish formal political and commercial relations between the two countries. Therefore, when on May 26, 1920, a month after Borch's negotiating team left Berlin for China, Knipping received a letter from ex-Imperial Consul Dr. F. Siebert in Tientsin informing him of Hsü's desire to employ two or three German General Staff officers,²³ he resolved to take advantage of this opportunity to cultivate good relations with one of the more powerful men behind the Peking government and thereby advance the conclusion of a Sino-German Treaty.

²²Clubb, 101-102. It should be observed that Hsü's position in Outer Mongolia was possible only because of the collapse of Russia's power in Asia. During the winter of 1919-1920, the Anfu clique's policy coincided with its close connection with Japan, particularly with regard to the "Northwest." Hsü's brutal policy in Mongolia and the subsequent Chinese takeover was inimicable to Russia's long-term interests. Conflict developed in the region both with the White Russian adventurer Baron Ungern-Sternberg and later with the communist governments of Soviet Russia and the Far Eastern Republic with the result that the Chinese were expelled from Outer Mongolia. Knipping seems to have been oblivious to the fact that support of Hsü could have created friction for Germany with the Soviet Union. See Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, III, 511-12, for a general account, and Whiting, 139ff., and Peter Tang, 114ff., for details.

²³PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, Siebert (Tientsin) to Knipping (VII Chi 399), March 19, 1920.

Moreover, Hsü was thought already to be pro-German. Knipping established contact with the *Reichswehr* through an intermediary (Lt. Col. von Bernewitz) and soon was able to reply to Siebert that four candidates for the positions ("composition of scholarly works") had been located.²⁴

However, Hsü Shu-cheng's growing power aroused the jealousy of other warlords, including his former ally, Chang Tso-lin, and by the end of June 1920 a combine had been formed and was ready to move against Hsü. In July, President Hsü Shih-ch'ang, backed by the Fengtien and Chihli cliques, removed the Anfu warlord from his government posts, thereby precipitating the Anhwei-Chihli War of July, 1920. The Anfu forces were decimated, Tuan Ch'i-jui disappeared from the political scene until 1924, and Hsü Shu-cheng, after taking refuge in the Japanese Legation at Peking, moved to political obscurity in Shanghai.²⁵

²⁴*Ibid.*, Memo (zu VII Chi 399), June 8, 1920; Bernewitz to AA (VII Chi 629), June 23, 1920; Knipping to Siebert (zu VII Chi 629), July 2, 1920. The officers applying for the positions were:

Rittmeister a.D. Johann Albrecht von Blücher
Hauptmann a. D. von Deines
Major Otto von Stülpnagel
Major Edwin von Stülpnagel

For the latter's role in the military politics of the Weimar period, see Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 225, 334. The latter two officers should not be confused with General Joachim von Stülpnagel, Chief of the Personnel Office under General Heye and close associate of Kurt von Schleicher (see *infra*), or Karl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel, later *Militär-befehlshaber* in France and participant in the "July 20" *Putsch*. As a matter of fact, during the period under consideration, the Stülpnagel family (owners of the *Börsenzeitung*) furnished the *Reichswehr* with six officers. See Harold J. Gordon, Jr., *The Reichswehr and the German Republic, 1919-1926* (Princeton, 1957), 363, and *passim*.

²⁵Li Chien-nung, 395-97; Clubb, 101-102. Hsü continued to be active in warlord politics on a minor scale until his murder in December 1925. See Sheridan, *Feng Yü-hsiang*, 186n. It is interesting that in October 1922 Hsü found himself momentarily allied with Sun Yat-sen. with the latter assigning Chiang Kai-shek as Hsü's chief of staff. See T'ang Leang-li, *Inner History*, 147.

These domestic events in China scuttled Knipping's project. On August 4, 1920 he wrote to Bernewitz that the political situation in China had completely altered and that "our recently influential friend" for the time being was completely impotent. He feared that the plan would have to be abandoned, but promised to keep the Colonel informed of any new developments.²⁶

Even though this scheme fell through, other opportunities soon arose which the East Asia desk could use to promote German influence in North China. A certain Herr Lorenz informed the Wilhelmstrasse in August 1920 that he had been requested by the former Chinese military *attaché* in Berlin, "Wu Kuang Djie," to locate military "engineers, veterinarians, and officers" who would be willing to enter Chinese service in Honanfu.²⁷ The Wilhelmstrasse also learned from an agency which was active in securing employment for ex-officers that the Chinese were seeking an engineer and an artillery officer to teach at the Chinese War Academy in Peking, and two veterinarians.²⁸ It is not clear from the available documentation²⁹ what resulted from this initiative, although it seems that the Wilhelmstrasse did not object, and it is likely that at least Lorenz

²⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, Knipping to Bernewitz (zu VII Chi 745), August 4, 1920.

²⁷*Ibid.*, Lorenz to AA (VII Chi 937), August 10, 1920.

²⁸*Ibid.*, RANO (*Reichsarbeitsnachweis für Offiziere E.V.*) to AA (VII Chi 949), August 12, 1920. RANO formerly was the "*Deutscher Hilfsbund für Kriegsverletzte Offiziere.*"

²⁹*Ibid.*, Note (zu VII Chi 949), August 18, 1920. It was decided that the affair would be settled by a discussion between the representatives of RANO and Referat China.

himself ended up in Chinese employ.³⁰

A more curious case, also in the summer of 1920, is that of Captain (ret.) König. At the beginning of the war, König had served with the East Asian Marine Detachment and, presumably after his release from Chinese internment following the fall of Tsingtao, had later secured employment in a "purely military capacity" with the Peking government. In order to elevate German influence with the Chinese authorities, the Wilhelmstrasse, with a view to raising König's status with the Peking government, prevailed upon the *Reichswehrministerium* to promote König to the rank of major, an elevation that initially was resisted on bureaucratic grounds.³¹

Another case, again in the late summer 1920, was that of Major (ret.) René Dammron. Dammron, on the strength of his assertion that he had obtained a position as advisor to the Hanyang Arsenal,³² attempted to win the support of German firms seeking enlarged trade relations with China by arguing that he would be in a position to further the interests of German industry and commerce by securing contracts and by

³⁰ See MA, W 02-44, *Akte Deutsche Beraterschaft in China* [hereafter cited as W 02-44/-], Vol. 9, "Stand, 1.4.36," 171-73. (Appendix J, *infra*.)

³¹ The *Reichswehrministerium* pointed out that the requisite time spent as Captain before eligibility for promotion was four years and six months, and suggested that perhaps the purpose of raising his status could be served by the AA granting him a comparable civilian title. The AA was not amenable to this proposal, observing that the Chinese would not be impressed to the same degree by a civilian title as they would be by a higher military rank. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: *Militär*, I, AA to RWM (VII Chi 815), August 2, 1920; RWM to AA, 1503/8.20 (VII Chi 965), August 13, 1920; AA to RWM (zu VII Chi 965), August 18, 1920; AA to RWM (zu VII Chi 1091), September 20, 1920; AA to Borch, No. 13 (zu VII Chi 1230), October 15, 1920. König died of a gastric ulcer in June 1921. *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 52 (VII Chi 1453), June 29, 1921.

³² The Hanyang Arsenal was one of two large, modern arsenals in China at this time and manufactured guns and rifles of German design. See Powell, *Chinese Military Power*, *passim*.

propagandizing German products.³³ The major's prospective employment by the Hanyang Arsenal did not stem from any previous experience in China but from the fact that during the war he had become friendly with various Chinese officers while he was seconded to General Headquarters. The Wilhelmstrasse was more concerned with his inadequate understanding of Chinese affairs and his consequent unsuitability to represent German industry than with any political repercussions that might ensue from his plans.³⁴ At any rate, it did not oppose his taking up service in China, but limited itself to warning him that conditions there were turbulent and that he had better assure himself of his position and of adequate funds before he left Germany.³⁵

From these incidents, it emerges that already in 1920 at least the East Asia desk of the Foreign Ministry was willing to sidestep the provisions of the Versailles Treaty with regard to German nationals serving abroad in a military capacity. During the summer of 1920, the Wilhelmstrasse, in its pursuit of its main China policy - that of concluding a formal treaty with Peking and thereby restoring trade relations - attempted to expand German influence in North China by encouraging the engagement of German ex-officers in various military capacities. However, following the change in the domestic political

³³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, March (Carlowitz & Co., Hamburg), to Knipping (VII Chi 1015), August 27, 1920.

³⁴*Ibid.*, AA to March (zu VII Chi 1015), September 21, 1920.

³⁵*Ibid.*, AA to Dammron (Stuttgart) (zu VII Chi 1015), September 4, 1920. The major did go to China but was not hired at Hanyang. He finally found employment at a smaller arsenal at Chengtu in Szechwan Province. *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, K. No. 293 (VII Chi 1714), June 23, 1921. (Also see the *Anlage* of this report: Consul Bracklo (Hankow) to Peking, J. No. I 785, June 17, 1921.)

situation in China of that year, and particularly after the conclusion of the Sino-German agreement in May 1921, the Wilhelmstrasse adopted a more cautious policy in this regard and henceforth opposed German nationals accepting military assignments in China.

It will be recalled that during 1921-1923 Sun Yat-sen had attempted to secure German technical and military advisors and assistance to bolster his regime in South China. Sun's emissary in Germany, Major-General Chu Ho-chung, had discussed the matter with various high personages in the German government, including the then head of the *Reichswehr*, General Hans von Seeckt.³⁶ It can be surmised that Chu was seeking experts to expand the arsenal facilities in Canton³⁷ as well as general staff officers. Although the Wilhelmstrasse, eager to improve relations with the southern authorities, assisted him in some matters, and although it did not openly or directly hinder Chu's efforts in this sphere, he was informed that the employment of German nationals in a military advisory position was not acceptable. Perhaps Berlin's opposition explains why the Chinese general was unable to find any suitable candidates. It seems plain, judging by the number of competent men who later would join Bauer in China, that there were many ex-officers who were available and willing to accept such employment.

³⁶ See *supra*, 64-65.

³⁷ Prior to the success of the Communists following the Second World War, the manufacture of modern armaments was a major problem throughout China. All factions attempted to increase their self-sufficiency. Moreover, General Chu assumed the post of Director of the Canton Arsenal upon his return to China. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 5 A Chi: SIA. Rep.*, II, Siemens-Schuckert Werke (Shanghai) to Knipping (IVb Chi 790), March 25, 1924. At least two German advisors were employed in Canton at the end of 1923. Schöppe, a chemist at the arsenal, and Major (ret.) Paul Müller as advisor to the Police Chief. See Mehner, 41.

During the period of the Kuomintang-Soviet cooperation from 1923-1927, the problem of German military advisors taking up employ in China was a relatively minor one. The Kuomintang found their advisors in Soviet Russia, another major power outside the Treaty System, and the number of individual Germans finding their way into the service of one warlord or another was very small. Nevertheless, particularly after Minister Boyé's position in Peking had stabilized and Sino-German trade had shown a marked increase, the Wilhelmstrasse remained sensitive to the unfavorable publicity invariably arising out of reports of German nationals serving in a military capacity with the various factions in China's domestic struggle. Some reports were simply rumors with no concrete basis in fact; others were based upon malevolent interpretation of the particulars. Typical of the latter was a report in the London *Daily Telegraph* in February 1924 which asserted that German military and technical experts had been employed in the Taiyuan Arsenal by warlord Yen Hsi-shan to teach the Chinese to manufacture poison gas.³⁸ This report illustrates the suspicion with which the Entente press regarded Germany in matters concerning armaments. Yen Hsi-shan had expanded the arsenal under his control in 1923, and had imported machinery and technicians from Germany - but no poison gas was manufactured.³⁹

Such reports also threatened to disturb Germany's relations with Peking. Yen was virtually independent and any strengthening of his position in the internal balance of forces in China was naturally regarded in Peking with misgiving.

³⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, W.T.B. report (IVb Chi 485), February 20, 1924.

³⁹See Donald G. Gillin, *Warlord Yen Hsi-shan of Shansi Province, 1911-1949* (Princeton, 1967), *passim*.

A few months later a more disturbing report appeared. It was rumored that a confidant of Sun Yat-sen's, Gustav Amann⁴⁰ (at the time employed by Siemens, China), had hired a number of military pilots for service in Canton. The German Minister in Peking was alarmed.⁴¹ Boyé had been working hard to restore his position with the diplomatic corps and was worried that the Treaty Powers would react unfavorably if the report should prove accurate. The report proved unfounded. Also calculated to embarrass Germany was another charge emanating that autumn from London to the effect that two German chemists employed in Canton were engaged in the production of poison gas,⁴² a charge that cannot now be refuted or substantiated on the basis of available evidence. Nevertheless, rumors of this sort do illustrate the delicate position in which Germany found herself during these years - on the one hand suspected of devious policies by the Entente press while on the other striving simultaneously to maintain neutrality between the various factions in

⁴⁰Gustav Amann was a German engineer and author who served Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang during the 1920's. His political views were strongly left-democratic, and his relationship with the leaders of the Kuomintang, particularly the Sun and Soong families, was very close. His main task was to act as an agent for securing European assistance for the reconstruction of China. Among other projects, he was directly involved in the construction of the Canton-Hankow railway and the scheme in 1926 to turn Canton into a deep-sea port. After the success of the Nationalists, he was employed as a "stringer" in China for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt*. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, IX, Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, J. No. 931 (IV Chi 1548), May 23, 1927; *ibid.*, XIII, Memo Michelsen (IV Chi 1386), July 13, 1928; *Handakten, Ha Pol.: Ritter - China*, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 1920), September 29, 1928; Memo Michelsen (zu IV Chi 1919/1920), October 12, 1928; Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, V, Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 1839 (IV Chi 501), December 28, 1928; Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, *passim*.

⁴¹PA, RM, 37 Chi, I, Boyé to AA, no No. (IVb Chi 1180), n.d. [received May 10, 1924].

⁴²PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: *Militär*, I, Boyé to AA, K. No. 363 (IV Chi 2638), October 25, 1924.

China's civil wars and to improve her relations with the Treaty Powers.

Prior to the departure of the Russian advisors from the Kuomintang camp in 1927 and the subsequent arrival of Max Bauer, one major Chinese figure attempted to secure limited German support, both private and governmental, in order to bolster his military position.⁴³ This was Marshal Chang Tso-lin, warlord of Manchuria and perhaps the major figure in the struggle for power in North China. As early as 1922, Chang had turned to German and Austrian firms for aid in expanding his arsenal facilities.⁴⁴ At least seven German nationals were employed in that year, most of them working in a weapons factory which assembled a modified version of the Mauser rifle. Over the next three years, German import firms in China, notably Carlowitz & Co., and exporters in Germany participated ever more closely in the expansion of Chang's military establishment. Chemical plants were constructed for the manufacture of trinitrotoluol and chlorine gas.⁴⁵ As a matter of fact, by 1927 German import firms in China controlled some two-thirds of the armaments

⁴³There was one German officer employed as an advisor to Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang in 1925. He was certainly unique however, as Feng relied on Soviet Russia for advisors, with estimates as to their numbers ranging between 36 and 200. See Sheridan, *Feng Yü-hsiang*, 167.

⁴⁴See Chapter IV, *supra*. One of the German nationals employed at the Mukden arsenal, Scherer, was involved in a sensational manslaughter case in 1924. An extremely harsh sentence (15 years) was initially handed down by a Chinese court causing international concern about the maintenance of the extraterritoriality system. See Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 115-16.

⁴⁵In reply to a query from Berlin, Boyé informed the Wilhelmstrasse in 1925 that the Mukden Consulate had determined that, contrary to another report out of London, no German chemists were employed by Chang Tso-lin in 1925. This was incorrect. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 55 (IV Cho 2099), September 30, 1925.

business with Manchuria.⁴⁶

Warlord Chang Tso-lin had immense respect for Germany's military accomplishments⁴⁷ and, apparently in order to terminate excessive reliance upon Japan for the instruction of his officers,⁴⁸ in 1925 he requested the German Consul at Mukden to secure permission for two of his staff officers to attend the *Reichswehr* infantry and artillery schools. The move was logical - no break with the existing system of military training would follow because the Japanese methods widely followed in North China originally derived from German military patterns and concepts. At the same time, Germany was much less of a threat to Chang's freedom of movement in China's domestic politics than was Japan. It may not be farfetched to view the warlord's request as a first step toward freeing himself from dependence on Japan.

It is interesting that the Wilhelmstrasse fully supported Chang's request on "political grounds."⁴⁹ The Peking government at this point operated largely at the sufferance of the Fengtien party of Chang Tso-lin (within a month he would be dominant), and it also was just at this time that the Wilhelmstrasse was regarding with great interest the prospective

⁴⁶See esp. *ibid.*, Consulate Mukden to AA, No. 82, February 29, 1928; Consulate-General Tientsin to AA, J. No. 1198 (IV Chi 927), April 25, 1928.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, Consulate Mukden to AA, no No. (IV Chi 2001), September 4, 1925; *RM*, 37 *Chi*, V, Memo Michelsen, September 11, 1933.

⁴⁸*PA*, Abt. IV, Po 13 *Chi*: *Militär*, I, Consulate Mukden to Trautmann, no No. (IV Chi 2002), September 5, 1925.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, AA to *RWM* (zu IV Chi 2001/2002 and 2060), October 2, 1925. See also Schubert to Boyé, No. 71 (IV Chi 2060), September 25, 1925; and Boyé to AA, No. 54, September 28, 1925.

meeting of the Special Tariff Conference called for October 26, 1925.⁵⁰ Here was an opportunity to win favor in the north of China without risking violation of Germany's international commitments. The Versailles Treaty did not specifically prohibit foreign officers being seconded with Germany's armed forces or attending her military schools. Moreover, Chang Tso-lin currently had a number of officers receiving training in France,⁵¹ a state of affairs which would have made it awkward for that country to protest the training of his officers by Germany. However, the *Reichswehr*, in compliance with its "basic policy of not permitting foreign officers of any nation to attend its schools or to train in the field with German units," refused to make an exception for the officers of a Chinese warlord.⁵² From the *Reichswehr*'s point of view, the significance of the Wilhelmstrasse's request must have seemed slight indeed.

While the Wilhelmstrasse was willing to recommend acceptance of

⁵⁰See Chapter III, *supra*. It is worth repeating that the Chinese diplomatic campaign against Germany's declaration of intent to adhere to the Nine-Power Treaty did not begin until an anti-Fengtien coalition expelled Chang Tso-lin from Peking. He retired to his Mukden stronghold at the end of December 1925, and the Peking government was reshuffled with the portfolio of Foreign Affairs falling into the hands of C. T. Wang. Likewise, the dispute petered out after Chang Tso-lin and Wu P'ei-fu regained the capital in March 1926. See Pollard, 275-79.

⁵¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, Consulate Mukden to AA, no No. (IV Chi 2001), September 4, 1925.

⁵²*Ibid.*, RWM to AA, No. 3593 (IV Chi 2141), October 8, 1925. See also *ibid.*, Trautmann to Boyé, No. 76 (zu IV Chi 2141), October 10, 1925. The grounds given by the RWM for its refusal are obviously inaccurate. Soviet officers were seconded to *Reichswehr* schools and attended maneuvers. After the triumph of the Nationalists in 1928, the *Reichswehr* changed the policy with regard to their officers for a few years. See *ibid.*, *passim*, for a number of approved requests for seconding with German units; and for Soviet officers attending German staff schools, see Erickson, 281.

Chinese officers for training with the German armed forces,⁵³ it did not waver in its opposition to German nationals going abroad as military advisors. During the summer of 1926, the Mukden regime, taking advantage of a visit to Manchuria of a German cruiser (*Hamburg*) under Admiral Paul Behncke, the former chief of the naval command,⁵⁴ discussed with him and members of the German Consulate at Mukden the question of employing a German naval advisor for the construction of a Manchurian fleet-base in Hulutao harbor. Once again it seems that the motive for turning to Germany for a military advisor was Chang Tso-lin's desire to lessen Japanese influence in his camp. Now that Chang Tso-lin's star had begun to decline (the Northern Expedition had been launched the previous spring), both Fischer, the German Consul at Mukden, and Boyé strongly opposed the

⁵³The following year the Chinese Legation in Berlin requested permission for the adjutant of the Military Governor of Heilungkiang (Manchuria) to attend the newly established infantry training school at Dresden. The Wilhelmstrasse supported the request; the *RWM* again refused. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, Chinese Legation Berlin to AA, No. 3730.C.26 (IV Chi 2365), November 15, 1926; *RWM* to AA, No. 3825/25.T.3. III (II F 3872), December 10, 1926.

⁵⁴One cannot help but be struck by the coincidence that during the same year the German Navy, making use of a visit of Admiral Behncke to Moscow, "suggested tentatively" that Soviet-German naval talks might be useful. Subsequently, the Russians approached Berlin and discussion between the two navies did take place (concerning German assistance in reorganizing the Red Navy and provision of technical advice). At a conference of the German Navy high command attended by the then chief, Admiral Zenker, at which policy in this matter was discussed, Captain von Loewenfeld (a former *Freikorps* leader) argued that at the moment Britain was the leader of western culture and the only viable defense against Bolshevization of Europe. Therefore, the German Navy should seek an understanding with Britain and treat the Russians dilatorily. This policy was adopted. In China, Chang Tso-lin was the main opponent of the Nationalists and the Communists (as well as having areas of friction with the Russians), and the main anti-Bolshevik figure. On the basis of available evidence one can only speculate on German Navy policy toward the Mukden regime. See Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 238-42, on the German Navy debate on policy toward the Soviet Union; see Iriye, 90ff., for the attitude of Chang Tso-lin from 1926-1928.

Manchurian warlord's request for German acquiescence in his employment of a German national as a naval advisor, referring to the inevitable complications which would ensue with the other factions in China as well as with Japan which regarded Manchuria as her sphere of influence.⁵⁵ Despite the disapproval of the Wilhelmstrasse (the period of "meticulous neutrality" had begun) however, the individual in question, Otto Ehrich, a former German Navy flier already active for some two years at Mukden in the import of German telephone, wireless, and other such equipment, was hired in 1926 by the Manchurian regime as a naval technical advisor to Admiral Chen Hung-li, Commander of Manchurian Sea Forces.⁵⁶

Although the East Asia desk of the German Foreign Ministry regarded such incidents with grave concern because of the unfavorable comment which could follow in the Entente press, these isolated hirings of German nationals by Chinese warlords were of relatively little significance compared to the magnitude of the problem following the rise in political and military strength of the Nationalists. Naturally enough, Western newspapers began to report that German military advisors were assisting the Kuomintang forces in various capacities.⁵⁷ By 1927 these rumors had begun to take on alarming proportions for the

⁵⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 14 Chi: *Marineangelegenheiten*, I, Boyé to AA, No. 3382 (IV Chi 2410), *Anlage* 1 (Consulate Mukden, No. 425, October 28, 1926), November 2, 1926. See also *ibid.*, Consulate Mukden to AA, No. 466, November 3, 1926.

⁵⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: *Allgemeines*, VII, Boyé to AA, No. 1482 (IV Chi 1302), *Anlage* 1 (Consulate Mukden, No. 113, April 20, 1927), April 25, 1927.

⁵⁷For example, in the early summer of 1927, a special correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune* in China reported that German nationals were employed by Chiang Kai-shek in his Munitions Department, and in arsenals at Wuchang, Hanyang, and Canton. See *ibid.*, Thiel to AA, J. No. 1190 (IV Chi 1901), July 18, 1927. See also *Erlass* IV Chi 1489 of June 10, 1927 (not found) regarding denial of such rumors.

Wilhelmstrasse.⁵⁸ For one thing, the expulsion of the Soviet military advisors by the reconstituted Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-shek in the summer of 1927 and the subsequent transfer of the Whampoa Military Academy to Nanking brought reliable and disquieting reports from German officials in China that the Nationalists were indeed considering replacing the Russians with German military advisors.⁵⁹

The scheme was promoted particularly by General Li Nai, a Kuomintang officer who later played an important role in conjunction with the military advisory staff established by Colonel Max Bauer. At the end of July 1927, a certain General Chen Shao-wu (who prior to the war had spent six years attached to various military units in Germany) was expected to travel to Germany for the purpose of engaging a suitable number of German ex-officers for duties at the War School. Chen already had approached the Consulate-General at Shanghai in order to obtain support for his mission, but had been refused any official assistance on the grounds that the question was of such importance that it could only be decided in Berlin. Thiel, the Consul General, although personally in opposition to the project, gave the General a personal letter of introduction to the Foreign Ministry in the hope that this would soften the rejection. Thiel hoped that Chen could be dissuaded by Berlin from going through with his plans.⁶⁰

The German Minister in Peking, Boyé, was particularly alarmed

⁵⁸It was in May 1927 that the Foreign Ministry ordered a major examination of the legal situation regarding the employment of German nationals abroad in military capacities. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 OA: Generalia*, Memo (e.o. S.O. 318/27), May 3, 1927.

⁵⁹*PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, IV, Boyé to AA, No. 2470 (IV Chi 2035), August 9, 1927.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*

by Chen's mission. He recommended to the Wilhelmstrasse that not only all official and unofficial aid be refused, but that Berlin should actively work to scuttle this project. Boyé pointed out that no matter what length the German government might go to protest its non-involvement and disapproval, a dozen German military advisors at Nanking would be regarded by the entire world as a flagrant violation of Article 179 of the Versailles Treaty. Furthermore, in China it would signify open support for one of the belligerents in the domestic conflict and could not remain without repercussions with the opposing factions. These objections stemmed from rational considerations. However, they were intensified by the German Minister's antipathy to the new order taking shape in China. No longer, he said, were the Chinese the intelligent, pleasant, honorable, and courteous individuals with whom one had had the pleasure of dealing in the past. They had been replaced by what he termed as the new "highly unpleasant type of 'half-Chinese'," men trained at an early age by American missionaries, receiving a superficial half-education in Europe, and having no understanding of culture and art, not even being able to read their own language. All they were interested in was attaining the highest possible position in pursuit of which all degrees of anti-foreignism were employed in order to court favor with the masses. Moreover, Boyé continued, it would be the utmost naïveté to believe that the Nationalists were turning to Germany from any feelings of gratitude or friendship. True, German military capabilities were admired, but the Chinese were much more motivated by the fact that Germany was a "safe and comfortable country" with which to deal - no extraterritoriality, no gunboats, and no angry, threatening government standing behind the rights of German nationals. Further, he observed

(inaccurately), the German military personnel who had served China as instructors prior to the war had brought to Germany not the slightest return. The Chinese were not responsive to accommodating and friendly acts. "Nothing would lessen our respect or damage our reputation more than if these presumptuous and corrupt 'one-day rulers' get the idea that the Germans, despite all the bad treatment, are at all times eager to curry Chinese favor."⁶¹

Although Boyé's chauvinistic outburst certainly exaggerated the situation, his basic objections to German military personnel taking up service with the Nationalists were justified beyond a doubt. The Nationalists had not yet proved that they would master the internal divisions in their own ranks, nor shown a decisive superiority over the northern warlords. Of perhaps greater importance in the Wilhelmstrasse's calculations was the detrimental consequences for Germany's image which would ensue from the reappearance of German military advisors in China. Complications would probably develop with the Treaty Powers, particularly Japan and Great Britain. Thus Berlin needed no persuasion from Boyé to maintain its opposition to German nationals taking up military service in China.

Further reports that summer, including one that the Provincial Government of Canton was planning once again to expand its arsenal facilities and for this purpose intended to hire German weapons-engineers, officers, and technicians, led the Wilhelmstrasse to remind the *Reichswehr* Ministry once more of the basic political objections. In particular, the *Reichswehr* was requested to inform the Foreign Ministry if any of General Chu Ho-chung's contact men in Germany were discovered soliciting ex-officers

⁶¹*Ibid.*

for employment in Canton.⁶² At this time the *Reichswehr* accepted the Foreign Ministry's China policy, a situation that would not alter for some years. Nevertheless, the Canton authorities, in a manner not discernable from the available documentation, were able to establish contact in Germany with one rather important candidate. To the surprise and alarm of the Wilhelmstrasse, a cryptic telegram from Boyé arrived in Berlin on November 17, 1927: "Canton telegraphed on 16.11 [1927] that Colonel Bauer engaged by General Li Tsi-sam [Li Chi-shen]⁶³ for the General Staff has arrived in Canton."⁶⁴ The beginning of a long-lasting problem for the Wilhelmstrasse and of increasingly close German-Chinese relations had arrived.

⁶²PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, AA to RWM (e.o. IV Chi 2170), September 10, 1927.

⁶³Li Chi-shen, once Dean of Whampoa Military Academy, was a prominent Kwangsi and Kuomintang military figure. In April 1927 he pledged his support to Chiang Kai-shek in purging the Kuomintang of communistic elements and in January 1928 became Chiang Kai-shek's chief of the general staff, but he subsequently broke with him. See T'ang Leang-li, *Inner History*, *passim*; Clubb, 139ff.; and F. F. [Chih-pu] Liu, *A Military History of Modern China, 1924-1949* (Princeton, 1956), 61-62, and *passim*.

⁶⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, Boyé to AA, No. 233 (IV Chi 2574), November 16, 1927.

CHAPTER VI

THE WILHELMSTRASSE AND THE ORIGINS OF THE GERMAN MILITARY MISSION IN NANKING: COLONEL MAX BAUER

Although the problem of German ex-officers entering the service of Chinese warlords was not novel, the arrival in Canton on November 15, 1927¹ of Colonel Max Bauer² came as a "complete surprise" to the

¹BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 13-14. Bauer arrived in Hong Kong on the 14th and travelled to Canton the following morning by river steamer. One may well wonder what the British authorities thought of his arrival in south China. A few months earlier, on May 11, 1927, the Colonial Office had proposed to the Foreign Office that Li Chi-shen, Bauer's subsequent employer (*infra*), be supplied from Hong Kong with arms and munitions. Li represented the militant anti-Communist camp in the south and, according to the Colonial Office, "it was illogical to handicap [him] by placing obstacles in the way of the supply of arms and ammunition necessary for the maintenance of peace and good order while the forces of disorder are liberally furnished with arms by the Soviet." The Colonial Office further argued that such a policy would not compromise the 1919 Arms Embargo because "the purpose was merely to police Canton." The Foreign Office rejected this suggestion, and apparently the British policy of neutrality toward China's civil strife at this time did not change, at least at the level of higher officialdom. See Colonial Office to Foreign Office, Immediate and Secret, C.P. 13304, May 11, 1927, quoted in Louis, 120, and his discussion of the policy dispute, 116-23.

²There is as yet no full-scale biography of Bauer. The article by John P. Fox, "Max Bauer: Chiang Kai-shek's first Military Adviser," *Journal of Contemporary History*, V, No. 4 (1970), 21-44, surveys his activities in China. His role in German politics during and after the First World War is touched on in, *inter alia*, Gordon A. Craig, *The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945* (rev. ed.; New York, 1964), 306-408, *passim*; Gerald D. Feldman, *Army, Industry and Labor in Germany, 1914-1918* (Princeton, 1966), *passim*; Gerhard Ritter, *Staatskunst und Kriegshandwerk: Das Problem des "Militarismus" in Deutschland*, IV, (München, 1968), *passim*; Willibald Gutsche, *et al.*, *Deutschland im Ersten Weltkrieg: Januar 15 bis Oktober 1917*, *passim*, and Joachim Petzold, *et al.*, *Deutschland im Ersten Weltkrieg: November 1917 bis November 1918*, *passim*, Vols. 2 and 3 of Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaft zu Berlin [East], Institut für Geschichte, Arbeitsgruppe Erster Weltkrieg, *Deutschland im Ersten Weltkrieg*, general editor Fritz Klein (3 Vols.; Berlin [East], 1968-1969); Johannes

Wilhelmstrasse.³ The Bauer case was both unique and of major importance, and one may state confidently that the surprise was accompanied by apprehension, and, as events unfolded, followed by complete dismay. It is difficult to imagine a German ex-officer whose appearance in China was more likely to cause embarrassment to the Wilhelmstrasse's policies of meeting Germany's international obligations and maintaining neutrality toward the various factions in China. Like his erstwhile mentor, General Erich Ludendorff, Bauer was widely regarded as one of the most notorious "political adventurers"⁴ in post-war Germany. He was an avowed enemy of the republican system in Germany and of the Versailles settlement. His ideas about collaboration with the Soviet Union were as well known as his "*national bolschewistischen*" inclinations.⁵ All of this tended to focus public attention on his activities in China. Whereas earlier German military men taking up employment in China had done so on an individual basis, Bauer did so with the intent of establishing a large-scale, if unofficial, German military "mission." His success in this

Erger, *Der Kapp-Lüttwitz-Putsch: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Innenpolitik 1919/1920* (Düsseldorf, 1967), 141.

³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 2089), October 26, 1928. Berlin had an agreement with the Chinese Legation that visas for China would only be issued on the "advice" of the Foreign Ministry. When asked why Bauer received a visa without the knowledge of the German authorities, the Chinese *chargé d'affaires* replied that since it was obvious that the German government would not have acquiesced in Bauer's going to China, it was decided not even to ask in his case.

⁴The *Vossische Zeitung*, October 25, 1928, referred to him as an "undisciplined political adventurer."

⁵His "eastern" orientation after the war was first linked publicly with extreme right Russian monarchist *émigrés*. His backing for the attempt in 1921 at the Reichenhall Conference to weld the *émigrés* into a united organization was "widely known and even commented upon in the press." Walter Laqueur, *Russia and Germany: A Century of Conflict* (London, 1965), 105-108.

endeavor introduced a new and complicating factor in Germany's China policy, particularly in view of the highly negative attitude of Japan toward the military modernization of China.

Max Bauer was born into a middle-class family on January 31, 1869 at Quedlinburg,⁶ a small town in the Harz mountains southwest of Magdeburg. Details on his early life are scant, but his education seems to have been in keeping with the normal practice of the Wilhelmine middle-class. He attended the classical *Gymnasium* at Quedlinburg and after graduation spent one Semester in Berlin studying law. In October 1888, he opted for a military career in the artillery branch, perhaps in keeping with his social origins but certainly in accord with his natural talent. He joined the Prussian Second Foot Artillery Regiment at Swinemünde as an *Offiziers-aspirant*. Within four years he had become adjutant of the regiment, and he advanced steadily in the artillery with his flair for technical matters. In 1902 he was promoted to Captain and, although he had not attended the War Academy, three years later received the coveted posting to the Great General Staff in Berlin presumably having displayed the organizational talent for which he later was to become well-known. He first served in Section 7, but soon transferred to Section 2 (*Aufmarschabteilung* - Operations Section) under Colonel Ludendorff. This was the beginning of their long and close association.⁷

Bauer remained with the General Staff, with the exception of one year with the 39th Division at Colmar, until the outbreak of war. He

⁶The biographical data are derived from *BA, Nachlass Bauer* (*Findbuch Kurz-Angaben über den Lebenslauf des Oberst Dr. h.c. Max Bauer*); and Ludwig Rüdts von Collenberg, "Max Bauer," *Deutsches Biographisches Jahrbuch*, XI (1929), 16-32.

⁷See the characterization in Feldman, *Army*, 150, and *passim*.

had become technically proficient in the field of heavy artillery and siege-warfare. His accomplishments early in the war (he was credited with development of the siege tactics which led to the fall of Liège and Namur⁸ and of the 42 cm. howitzers) earned him a *pour le mérite* and an honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy in 1915 from the University of Berlin. However, Bauer's major endeavors during the war were in organizing Germany's munitions and armaments supply program. In this area he was closely identified with the interests of German industrialists⁹ which coincided with those of the military - the necessity of total mobilization and a huge munitions program launched in 1916 (the "Hindenburg Program").

Bauer became Ludendorff's most trusted advisor, providing him with "both ideas and direction."¹⁰ As early as 1912-1913, they had collaborated in conjunction with the Pan-German press in agitating for the enlargement of the army and the improvement of its equipment, a campaign conducted against the wishes of the War Ministry. Again in 1914

⁸Fox, "Max Bauer," 24.

⁹Karl Drechsler, *Deutschland-China-Japan, 1933-1939: Das Dilemma der deutschen Fernostpolitik* (Berlin [East], 1964), 17ff., emphasizes the connections of industry with Bauer's establishment of the advisory group in China. Drechsler sees the work of the advisory group as that of "pacemakers for German [heavy] industry." The purpose of the mission is given as that of testing German war matériel, trying out tactical and strategical plans of the General Staff, and reorganizing Chiang Kai-shek's army for use against China's "liberation movement" (the Communists) and, ultimately, against the Soviet Union. Drechsler's Marxist interpretation is strained, but there is an element of truth with regard to the arms sales and industrial contacts (see *infra*). His book nevertheless can be consulted with profit by the western historian of Sino-German relations in the 1930's; he provides facts from East German and Russian sources not easily attainable. Of course his study must be used with care.

¹⁰Feldman, *Army*, 151. Much of the next two paragraphs is indebted to Feldman.

his desire to strengthen Germany's military position led him to push for a great armaments program. And in 1916, the success at that time of the advocates of an increased munitions program over the wishes of the War Ministry was attributable in no small part to the machinations of Colonel Bauer. His actions and attitudes in these matters seem to indicate a man convinced of the absolute correctness of his own position, a self-assurance which expressed itself in a willingness to intrigue against adherents of opposing views, even if they should be his legal and military superiors.

That Bauer was a strong-willed individual and ruthless in pursuit of his views seems incontrovertible, and this impression is heightened by the numerous political intrigues in which he became involved. Among the more notable were his 1917 cooperation with Stresemann of the National Liberals and Erzberger of the Centrists to undermine Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's support in the *Reichstag*,¹¹ his fight in the spring of 1918 against the introduction of equal suffrage in the Prussian *Landtag*, and his later turning against Ludendorff after Bauer had lost confidence in the General's competence to control the deteriorating situation at the end of the war. Moreover, in February of 1918, he actually contemplated replacing the Emperor with the Crown Prince. All of these episodes demonstrate not only that Bauer was a consummate intriguer, but that his conception of duty went far beyond that normally associated with a military officer. Bauer was a man of very strong nationalistic feelings, and to him his duty lay in serving the nation, a nation visualized in the romantic sense as pursuing a world-historical cultural mission and

¹¹Ritter, *Staatskunst*, III, *Die Tragödie der Staatskunst: Bethmann Hollweg als Kriegskanzler 1914-1917* (München, 1964), 536-87.

destiny. Thus with Bauer the defense of the nation superseded all else, even his oath and duty to the "Supreme Warlord."

In July 1918 Bauer suffered a brain concussion as the result of an automobile accident.¹² But the physical injury left no mark compared to the deep psychological scar resulting from Germany's defeat. Bauer was intensely embittered by the collapse and the subsequent revolution of 1918-1919. He has been credited¹³ with being one of the first and most important originators of the "stab in the back" myth. (It was during this period that Bauer's two polemical pamphlets, *Der Irrwahn des Verständigungsfriedens* and *Konnten wir den Krieg vermeiden, gewinnen, abbrechen?* appeared.) He mustered out of the army sometime during the autumn of 1918, and became one of the numerous ex-officers forced to seek employment for their talents elsewhere than in the permanent army.¹⁴ Although details on his movements and contacts in the latter part of 1918 and early 1919 are scant, it can be taken for granted that he continued to maintain his associations with old army comrades, particularly those of right-wing persuasion. He did, in any event, make new friends of that sort. For example his name is repeatedly linked with such individuals as Captain (later Major) Waldemar Pabst (who at that time was serving as the chief

¹²Rüdt von Collenberg, 26.

¹³Petzold, 25.

¹⁴For a good analysis of the attitude of those German ex-officers to whom the end of the war meant only frustration see Joachim C. Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the Nazi Leadership*, trans. by Michael Bullock (New York, 1970), 136-48. See also Hagen Schulze, *Freikorps und Republik 1918-1920* (Boppard am Rhein, 1969), 54-69.

of staff of the *Garde-Kavallerie-Schützendivision*).¹⁵ Pabst was of the same turn of mind as Bauer¹⁶ and the two developed a close relationship in succeeding years.

Bauer was deeply hostile to western influences and institutions and, with his penchant for intriguing, became involved during 1919 in right-wing plotting against the Republic. For example in July he went so far as to sound out the British government through Colonel Ryan, chief of staff to the Military Governor of Cologne, on its attitude toward a military dictatorship under Ludendorff which would restore order in Germany and "put her in a position to fulfil the terms of the Peace Treaty."¹⁷ Together with Pabst in the autumn of 1919, he was involved in the establishment of the "*Nationalen Vereinigung*,"¹⁸

¹⁵After April 1, 1919, renamed the *Garde-Kavallerie-Schützen-Korps*. This unit was one of the less reliable (due largely to Pabst's attitude) of the *Freikorps* then being formed by the *O.H.L.* for defense against external and internal enemies. See Schulze, 39, 213, and *passim*.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, *passim*, esp. 252. Pabst later became involved in efforts to "Bolshelize Poland so that Germany could demand a larger army," and in various other right-wing ventures. Gerhard L. Weinberg, *The Foreign Policy of Hitler's Germany: Diplomatic Revolution in Europe, 1933-1936* (Chicago, 1970), 88, n. 2. Like so many others of such persuasion, still later Pabst served as an armaments agent of a firm controlled by the German Ministry of War, Rheinmetall Borsig, engaging after 1933 in large scale weapons-dealings with Nanking. See PA, *Abt. Geh. Akt., Chi Pol. 13: Militär*, I, Memo (zu IV Chi 1620), June 30, 1933; Memo [re conversation with Pabst] (e.o. IV Chi 1620), July 6, 1930.

¹⁷*DBFP, First Series*, VI, 25-29, Memo by Ryan, July 5, 1919. Ryan seems to have had full confidence in Bauer, and that he was not scheming for a permanent restoration of the "old militarism"; nevertheless, the involvement of Ludendorff in the plan raised suspicions, and Balfour, then with the British Peace Delegation in Paris, minuted that no reply should be given to Bauer, and the British government should not get involved in any plans, secret or otherwise, for changes of government in Berlin. See also Erger, 141. Bauer made the same proposal to General Malcolm in Berlin a few weeks later. Malcolm considered that Bauer was engaged in a "dangerous intrigue" and advised that he be discouraged, a view concurred with by Foreign Secretary Lord Curzon. See *DBFP, First Series*, VI, 111-13, Memo by Malcolm, July 30, 1919.

¹⁸Schulze, 253; Rüdts von Collenberg, 27.

a political organization with the avowed purpose of overthrowing the Republic. Other members of significance for this narrative included General Ludendorff and Ignaz Timothy Trebitsch-Lincoln.

Trebitsch-Lincoln, by birth a Hungarian Jew and by calling an unscrupulous international adventurer, is one of the most colorful figures in this narrative.¹⁹ He was born in April 1879 in Paks, a small town some sixty miles south of Budapest. His early life was normal, highlighted only by an intensive religious upbringing. He rejected Orthodox Judaism when still in his teens, and began an extraordinary career of flitting from one faith to another. After a period of instruction in a Methodist Mission school at Hamburg, he went to Canada at the turn of the century in order to carry out his mission of "proselytizing [Christianity] among the Jews." He became first a Presbyterian missionary and later a Deacon in the Anglican Church in Montreal. He subsequently returned to Europe, continuing with evangelical work until other opportunities presented themselves.

While serving as a Parish Minister in England, he struck out into politics. He was elected Member of Parliament (for Darlington) for the Liberal Party and was attracted to more lucrative ventures than shepherding his flocks. Just prior to the First World War, Trebitsch-Lincoln established a business relationship with Benjamin Rowntree (of chocolate

¹⁹ My account is based upon his memoirs, J.T. Trebitsch-Lincoln, *The Autobiography of an Adventurer*, trans. by Emile Burns (London, 1931) [German title - *Der grösste Abenteurer des XX. Jh.'s?: Die Wahrheit über mein Leben* (Leipzig, 1931)]. His account is sensationalist, self-centered, and untrustworthy as to motives, but the factual material generally corresponds with other sources. See also David Lampe and Laszlo Szenasi, *The Self-made Villain: A Biography of Trebitsch-Lincoln* (London, 1961); and Imré Gyomai, *Trebitsch Lincoln: Le plus Grand Aventurier de Siècle* (Paris, 1939).

fame). He dabbled for oil in Poland and Rumania, and engaged in other speculative ventures. Back in England during the war, he subsequently ran afoul of the law.²⁰ He then fled to the United States where he was in and out of jail and, according to his own account, kept the press entertained with repeated escapades and a succession of sensationalist interviews. Extradited to England in 1916, Trebitsch-Lincoln was sentenced to imprisonment and spent almost three years in prison where he developed an admittedly intense hatred of that country. After his release and the German Armistice, he went to Germany where he found the situation ideal for continuing his career as an intriguer.

Trebitsch-Lincoln first came into contact with Bauer in the autumn of 1919 and immediately cemented a close relationship which lasted for many years. Presumably, it was Trebitsch-Lincoln's intense Anglophobia as well as his penchant for intrigue that initially appealed to Bauer. At any rate, together they participated in a scheme during these months to secure the support of the Crown Prince for a restoration attempt.²¹

Given his subsequent career, there is no reason to doubt Trebitsch-Lincoln's later claim that during his wartime imprisonment in England he had devised a scheme to revenge himself upon that country.

²⁰ Although some embezzlement was involved, he also apparently tried to establish himself as a German agent. Later, in 1920, he gave assurances to the British diplomatic representative in Vienna of his "sincere desire to prove his loyalty to the British Crown." Trebitsch-Lincoln also claimed that it was the "unjust action" of Captain W.R. Hall, Director of Naval Intelligence, who refused to employ him in January 1915 that "drove him to act as he did." See *DBFP, First Series*, XII, 267-68, that British Legation, Vienna, to Earl Curzon, September 21, 1920. (That Captain Hall had rebuffed Trebitsch-Lincoln is confirmed in *ibid.*, 267, n.4.)

²¹ For details, see Erger, 103-04; Trebitsch-Lincoln, 146-52, for his account of his mediation role.

There is reason to doubt, however, that his plan involved the reorganization of China by German experts "and making use of this weapon for a terrific blow against the English domination of the world."²² It was this scheme, he asserts, that led to him being put into touch with Bauer. But because Bauer had other irons in the fire, the plan supposedly had to be put off for the present.

The intrigue currently monopolizing Bauer's attention was the preparation of the *Putsch* which was being planned by right-wing circles in Berlin at this time. After the launching of the adventure in March 1920 (the Kapp *Putsch*), Bauer took over the position of Military Commander in the Berlin region as chief of staff to General von Lüttwitz and then became "*Chef der Reichskanzlei*." Trebitsch-Lincoln figured as one of the chief conspirators, serving as Bauer's press secretary. The quick collapse of the *Putsch* and the issuing of warrants for the arrest of the major participants obliged Bauer and Trebitsch-Lincoln to flee to Munich and then abroad. Although Bauer continued to maintain his close association with the reactionary and right-radical forces gestated in the aftermath of the First World War and engaged in intrigues throughout Central Europe, a new career was inaugurated for the irrepressible Colonel. Henceforth, he financed his political activities by serving foreign countries (and German industry)²³ as a technical

²²Trebitsch-Lincoln, 143. In view of the fact that Bauer's work in China was already completed by the time Trebitsch-Lincoln wrote (1931), it is entirely in character that he would have claimed to have planted the seed with Bauer. Trebitsch-Lincoln further asserts that he had booked passage for himself and five others for Asia in the autumn of 1919, but the Kapp *Putsch* venture intervened. The fact is that he did not go to China until the end of 1921 (after, according to his own account, he had sold to the French what information he had about the conspirators associated with Bauer and Ludendorff).

²³During his subsequent employment as an advisor in Spain and

advisor for modernization and industrialization.

After briefly going into concealment in Bavaria, Bauer made his way to Hungary where he established contact with the counter-revolutionary camp which had recently replaced the communist regime in that country.²⁴ Entente pressure, however, forced Bauer to leave Budapest,²⁵ and he returned to Germany. From 1920 to the autumn of 1921, he lived in Munich under the protection of Police-President Ernst Pöhner, a well-known right-wing figure in Bavaria and later a participant in Hitler's "Beer-Hall

Argentina he acted as an agent for the Junkers aircraft company. In 1927, he informed the firm that he expected remuneration for any sales of aircraft that might result from his previous activities in those countries. BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 47, Bauer to Kapitänleutnant a. D. Gotthard Sachsenberg, September 14, 1927.

²⁴Trebitsch-Lincoln, 191-208. Bauer's presence in Hungary is confirmed in DBFP, *First Series*, XII, 192, Legation Budapest to Curzon, June 1, 1920. That he was in contact with the "national socialist" and later Premier, Gyula Gömbös, is confirmed in C. A. McCartney, *October Fifteenth: A History of Modern Hungary, 1929-1945*, I, (Edinburgh, 1956), 35. Ruth Fischer [Elfriede Friedländer], *Stalin and German Communism* (London, 1948), 197, claims that Bauer's presence in Budapest at the time the Soviet-Polish War was raging was the result of coordination between the Bolsheviks and the German radical-right. She maintains that negotiations between Karl Radek, Viktor Kopp (head of the Soviet Trade Mission in Berlin), and Count Ernst zu Reventlow, subsequently a leading Nazi and member of the *Reichstag*, was the reason why Bauer, "one of Radek's major contacts, was in Budapest, [in order] to neutralize the anti-Bolshevik government in Hungary in case of a German-Russia alliance." Although it is true that Reventlow "flirted" with Radek during this period (Laqueur, 56), Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, III, 324, disputes Miss Fischer's claim with the argument that Radek's presence in Berlin at that time is open to doubt. On the basis of available documentary evidence, however, the reasons for Bauer's presence in Budapest at this time apparently have to remain unexplained. On the limited value of Ruth Fischer's reminiscences, see Werner T. Angress, *Stillborn Revolution: The Communist Bid for Power in Germany, 1921-1923* (Princeton, 1963), 489.

²⁵DBFP, *First Series*, XII, 195, Curzon to Legation Budapest, June 5, 1920; 205-206, Legation Budapest to Curzon, June 23, 1920.

Putsch."²⁴ Bauer completed his best known book during this time, *Der Grosse Krieg in Feld und Heimat*,²⁵ in which he set forth his views on the origins of the war and the reasons underlying German defeat. In late 1921, Bauer moved on, this time to Vienna where he was involved in organizing right-wing paramilitary units.²⁶

Of particular interest for this discussion are Bauer's "National Bolshevist"²⁷ tendencies and his attitude toward the Soviet Union. Like

²⁴Pöchner was tried for treason for his part in the *Putsch* in February 1924. It was during Bauer's stay with Pöchner that he and Ludendorff developed close ties with Max Scheubner-Richter, an early important National Socialist who was killed in the 1923 *Putsch*. See Laqueur, 105-06, and *passim*; Karl Dietrich Bracher, *The German Dictatorship: The Origins, Structure, and Effects of National Socialism*, trans. by Jean Steinberg (New York, 1970), 90ff.; and the recent study of Harold J. Gordon, *Hitlerputsch 1923: Machtkampf in Bayern 1923-1924*, trans. by Hans Jürgen Baron von Koskull (Frankfurt am Main, 1971), *passim*.

²⁵Tübingen, 1921.

²⁶It can be safely assumed that he was in close contact with his associate from the Kapp *Putsch*, Major Pabst, who was then trying to weld the disparate *Heimwehr* units into a coordinated force. See Andrew Whiteside, "Austria," in Hans Rogger and Eugen Weber, eds., *The European Right: A Historical Profile* (Berkeley, 1966), 330. Later, in 1923, Bauer wrote to Ludendorff from Vienna that he disagreed with Hitler's desire to take over the "Austrian National Socialists" and thought that they should continue to be "under my orders as hitherto." He apparently had little respect for the organizational abilities of Hitler and was contemptuous of the strength of the German Party. BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 81, Bauer to Ludendorff, August 20 and November 7, 1923, quoted in F.L. Carsten, *The Rise of Fascism* (London, 1967), 116-17. On Pabst's secret relations with Stresemann, see Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany*, 51-53; and on his activities in post-World War II Germany as an agent for the Swiss armament firm Oerlikon, his continued right-wing nationalist intrigues, and his association with an ex-German military advisor of Chiang Kai-shek's, Captain Walter Stennes (of whom more below), see Kurt P. Tauber, *Beyond Eagle and Swastika: German Nationalism Since 1945*, 2 vols. (Middletown, Conn., 1967), I, 240-41, 464, and II, VII/165-66. For a brief discussion of the plans of the Ludendorff-Bauer-Stephany clique to foment counter-revolution in Central Europe in 1920-1921, see Trebitsch-Lincoln, 191ff.

²⁷The ideological connection between the German radical-right and Communism (and the Soviet Union) is fully discussed in Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, *Linke Leute von rechts: Die nationalrevolutionären*

many ex-officers and nationalists who found it difficult to stomach the Weimar Republic and the Versailles settlement, Bauer early developed an interest in cementing a common front with Russia against the victorious western powers (and their decadent civilization). He was among those many Germans who visited Karl Radek in Berlin in the autumn of 1919, meeting the Bolshevik agent just after his release from Moabit prison. According to Radek's later account,²⁸ Bauer said that the necessary prerequisite for "a dictatorship of labor" in Germany was possible "only by agreement with the working class and the officer class" and that therefore the Bolsheviks "are Germany's allies in the struggle with the Entente." It is this last point - the struggle against the West - which motivated all of Bauer's subsequent intriguing and his gradual adoption of the idea of Soviet-German cooperation to break the stranglehold of the "decadent West."

During the next few years Bauer continued to intrigue against the Republic and the Versailles settlement, always willing to form a tactical alliance with communism or Russia in order to attain his ends.²⁹ Already at the time of the Kapp *Putsch* he had been willing to solicit

Minderheiten und der Kommunismus in der Weimarer Republik (Stuttgart, 1960), *passim*, esp. 183-84 on Bauer's ideological stance.

²⁸*Krasnaya Nov'*, No. 10 (1926), 169ff., cited in Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, III, 314. Carr disposes of Ruth Fischer's claim that Bauer visited Radek "regularly," this being the only meeting recorded by Radek.

²⁹It should be pointed out that Radek was playing a lone game at this time, and that he (and Lenin) strongly condemned in 1920 the German deviation of "National Bolshevism," or any alliance with the German bourgeoisie against the Entente. It was only gradually, through the pressure of events, that Soviet foreign policy became more receptive to the idea of a Soviet-German *Entente*. Likewise on the German side, it was only after the Soviet-Polish war that German nationalists began to clearly see the community of interest between the two countries (and the viability of Soviet power). Carr, *Bolshevik Revolution*, III, 318ff.

support from the communists.³⁰ His interest culminated in a visit to Russia at the invitation of the Soviet Government during the winter of 1923-1924 from which the book, *Das Land der Roten Zaren*,³¹ resulted.³² Here he sets forth his views on the necessity of cooperating with the Soviet Union in order to resist the West, as well as his admiration for Soviet accomplishments, particularly Trotsky's organization of the Red Army. It is possible that Bauer had visited the Soviet Union earlier, serving as representative in 1922 for the German *Truppenamt* in military talks with the Russians.³³

There is also evidence that Bauer's interest in China was stirred at this time. It should be recalled that it was during this period that an increased interest was shown in some circles in Germany in the

³⁰Erger, *passim*.

³¹Hamburg, 1925.

³²Apparently Bauer was involved in the establishment of a "military chemical" factory. This information emerges from documents spread by Soviet agents in 1926 (and published in the *Manchester Guardian*) in order to further embarrass Germany with the western powers by providing evidence of Soviet-German military and industrial cooperation. See ADAP, B, IV, 154-55, Memo Dirksen, January 26, 1927.

³³Fox, "Max Bauer," 27. The evidence cited by Fox is from British Foreign Office sources and the press organ of the Polish Socialist Party, *Robotnik*, but does not seem conclusive. Likewise, Erickson, 154, cites a contemporary French intelligence report that Bauer (and Hintze) were *en mission* for the Reichswehr in the spring of 1922. He also observes, 154, n.35, that at the time "there was quite a sale of spurious information." He subsequently states, 158, that the report of the French military Attaché in Warsaw to the effect that Bauer headed a "standing German military mission . . . in Soviet Russia from 1922-3, was largely correct." In view of the multitude of rumors floating about at this time of Rapallo and after, and the lack of documentary evidence, it seems that these questions for the present must remain unresolved. Moreover, reports of Bauer's official connections with the *Reichswehr* at this time seem inherently improbable; it is questionable if the *Reichswehr* would entrust such delicate matters as cooperation with the Soviets to the like of Bauer & associates.

geopolitical concept of a German-Chinese-Russian bloc which would provide a necessary counterweight to the western powers.³⁴ Among the individuals who have figured in this narrative, the names of Hintze³⁵ and Seeckt should be mentioned as prominent German political figures who adopted this view. It is not unlikely that Bauer's vision of a Soviet-German bloc was widened at this time to include China in the coalition which would provide the solution to Germany's post-war power-political predicament.³⁶

In any event, his old collaborator from Kapp *Putsch* days and subsequent adventures, Trebitsch-Lincoln, turned up in Europe in the autumn of 1923 with an offer for Bauer to come to China.³⁷ He had earlier broken with Bauer and the circle of conspirators (or more correctly probably they had broken with him!),³⁸ and gone to China where

³⁴See 63-65, *supra*.

³⁵The frequency with which Hintze and Bauer were linked in contemporary rumors must be taken as significant. See, e.g., Erickson, *passim*.

³⁶For a discussion of the mutual interest in China of German radical-right circles and the Soviet Union at this time as a means of overthrowing Western "imperialism," see Schüddekopf, *Linke Leute von rechts*, Chapter 23 ("*Die Parole vom Bündnis der unterdrückten Völker*"), 214-19.

³⁷See Trebitsch-Lincoln, 230ff. Cf. BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 40-46; No. 43 ("*Entwurf eines Vertrages mit dem Supertuchun der Provinzen Kiangsu und Kiangsi, Zürich, 17.2.1923 [sic?]*").

³⁸The break occurred because of intrigues within the group, a substantial amount of money which Trebitsch-Lincoln apparently tried to abscond with, and an ostensible plot to assassinate him. See Trebitsch-Lincoln, 200-208, for his confused account. That the conspirators resolved to get rid of Trebitsch-Lincoln is not at all unlikely. After expulsion from Budapest, he went to Vienna where he approached the British Legation with a story about a "world-wide anti-British conspiracy" in which he was involved and which was about to "harvest first success." However, having had a change of heart, he was willing to "make one final effort to prove to His Majesty's Government that in spite of all his

he initially entered the service of warlord Ch'i Hsi-yüan of Kiangsu,³⁹ later switching his allegiance to the powerful *tuchün* Wu P'ei-fu.⁴⁰ Trebitsch-Lincoln apparently was entrusted with the task of securing a loan in Europe and raising a competent staff to construct an armament industry for his employer. For this purpose, he travelled with a number of Chinese officers to Italy where, by previous arrangement, they met with Bauer in Venice. Here, and later in Zürich, Bauer agreed to go to China as chief industrial advisor to Wu P'ei-fu, and, according to Trebitsch-Lincoln, accepted an advance on his salary and funds for the trip to the Far East. He was to assume his duties on February 1, 1924.⁴¹

But the trip to Soviet Russia intervened, and Trebitsch-Lincoln returned to China alone and embittered.⁴² It is interesting to pursue the connection between Bauer's apparent change of mind and the concurrent interest of the Soviet Union. At this time, the Russians and the

venomous talk and vindictive actions he is still at heart attached to Great Britain." Earl Curzon's reply to the British Minister was succinct and cutting: "H.M. Government refuse to entertain this request. It would have been better if you had declined to receive this scoundrel and traitor and you should do so in future." *DBFP, First Series*, XII, 267-68, Legation Vienna to Curzon, September 21, 1920; 272, Curzon to Legation Vienna, September 24, 1920. Trebitsch-Lincoln, according to his own account (*passim*), made similar approaches in Prague to the Czechs and the French, and finally managed to sell his information.

³⁹For Ch'i Hsi-yüan's role in China's warlord politics, see Li Chien-nung, 468-69, 472ff.

⁴⁰See T'ang Leang-li, *Inner History*, 101ff.; Hsi-hseng Chi, *passim*; Clubb, 101ff.

⁴¹Trebitsch-Lincoln, 230ff. His account is further substantiated by his mention of Professor Otte as Bauer's sidekick in the venture. Otte, a school teacher from Vienna, accompanied Bauer to China in 1928.

⁴²Trebitsch-Lincoln, 254, felt that he had been "duped" by Bauer. See *infra*, 329, n. 17.

Kuomintang were inaugurating their well-known period of military cooperation⁴³ and it certainly was not in Russia's interest to see Sun's enemy Wu P'ei-fu strengthened. Moreover, Chiang Kai-shek arrived in Moscow in August 1923 with a Nationalist Military Mission, and did not return to China until December.⁴⁴ Therefore, the possibility exists that the paths of Bauer and the Chinese General crossed. The intriguing suggestion has been made⁴⁵ that Soviet influence persuaded Bauer to renounce his planned trip to China. Taking all the factors into account (including the unstable domestic situation in China), one must allow that the circumstances certainly point in that direction. However the question must remain open for the interim. Of some importance though is the fact that Trebitsch-Lincoln's initiative had awakened (renewed?) Bauer's interest in China, an interest that ultimately would lead him to that country.⁴⁶

During the next few years, Bauer continued to travel to various countries as an advisor on technical matters and modernization. In 1924, he was in Spain acting as a consultant to the Royal Government in

⁴³Erickson, 226-39, and *passim*; Clubb, 122-24.

⁴⁴Clubb, 122.

⁴⁵Schüddekopf, *Linke Leute von rechts*, 453, n.9.

⁴⁶During Bauer's first visit to China in 1927-1928, he again met Trebitsch-Lincoln on a steamer taking him from Shanghai to Canton. (The meeting was accidental.) *BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 43; Trebitsch-Lincoln, 276. Trebitsch-Lincoln had returned to Europe briefly from China in 1926 in the saffron robes of a Buddhist monk (and with a new name - "Chao Kung"), and notwithstanding the refusal of England to permit him to settle in Tibet, in his memoirs he later professed to see that England was now the real bulwark of civilization, heading off the Bolshevist-materialist world revolution! He asserted that he pleaded with Bauer not to enter Chiang Kai-shek's employment. Trebitsch-Lincoln died on October 9, 1943 in the French Settlement at Shanghai.

transportation and organizational matters. The following year he went to Buenos Aires at the invitation of the Argentine government where he engaged in pest-control and wrote a brochure on the control of locusts. He later made visits to Holland, Sweden, and Switzerland for consulting purposes, all the while maintaining contact with German industrial corporations.⁴⁷

Bauer had been able to return to Germany since the amnesty of September 1925 (he returned from Argentina in March 1926) and it was apparently there that in the spring of 1927 he was contacted through Ludendorff by the Chinese with a view to securing his services as a consultant for the modernization and industrialization of South China.⁴⁸ Some versions have it that "certain German industrial groups" suggested Bauer's name to Chiang Kai-shek with the ulterior motive of deriving profit and ultimately political advantage from closer Sino-German cooperation.⁴⁹ Another explanation advanced is that the American journalist Karl von Wiegand suggested to Chiang Kai-shek that Bauer would be a capable military advisor.⁵⁰ Gustav Ritter von Kreitner, a police advisor with long experience in the Far East, states simply that Chiang Kai-shek had heard of Bauer's reputation and established contact with

⁴⁷BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 47, 1-2; Rüdts von Collenberg, 29.

⁴⁸This contact is not necessarily linked with the proposed trip of General Chen in the summer of 1927 to hire advisors for the War School. See *supra*, 192.

⁴⁹Kurt Bloch, *German Interests and Policies in the Far East* (London, 1940), 12-13; Liu, 61-62.

⁵⁰Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 161. (However, see also *infra*, 264, n. 10.)

him after he had already arrived in China.⁵¹

Contemporary newspaper reports⁵² and some authors⁵³ however state that the Chinese had first approached General Ludendorff with the request that he advise them on modernization, but that Ludendorff refused on the grounds that China was in a state of chaos and recommended Bauer in his stead. Whether this was so or not, there is no doubt that Ludendorff was intimately involved in the inception of the advisory group and continued to maintain close connections with many of its members.

Bauer's first visit to China was not at the instigation of Chiang Kai-shek but of the southwestern military leader then in control of the Canton government, General Li Chi-shen. Li was then friendly to Chiang and the right-wing Kuomintang and strengthening his own hold as ruler of his so-called "south Capital" at Canton. Bauer wrote to a business acquaintance prior to leaving Germany that he would regard himself as an advisor to the "People's government" upon arrival in Canton.⁵⁴ It was

⁵¹Gustav Ritter von Kreitner, *Hinter China steht Moskau* (Berlin, 1932), 90. Kreitner, Dr. Jur. and Dr. Med., was born in Yokohama as the son of an Imperial Austrian Consul-General. He was employed by the Chinese government from 1910 to 1914, and after the war maintained contact with China as an advisor to Chinese missions in Europe. He returned to China in March 1928 as security advisor to the Provincial government of Chekiang, and six months later went to Nanking in the same capacity.

⁵²See, e.g., *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, *London Observer*, October 14, 1928. The Wilhelmstrasse traced the Ludendorff story back to Salzmann, the *Vossische Zeitung* correspondent in China. *PA, Handakten, Ha Pol: Ritter -China*, Memo Dirksen (e.o. IV Japan 695), August 9, 1928.

⁵³Borcke, 318; Fox, "Max Bauer," 28; Fritz Lindemann, *Im Dienste Chinas: Mein Anteil an seinem Aufbau - Erinnerungen aus den Jahren 1929 bis 1940* (Peking, 1940), 155.

⁵⁴*BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 47, Bauer to Sachsenberg (Junkerswerke A.G., Dessau), September 14, 1927. For the confused situation in Canton at the time, see Clubb, 139-43; Li Chien-nung, *passim*; Isaacs, 111-29.

only later that he was contacted by Chiang Kai-shek.⁵⁵

One can only speculate why the Chinese chose Bauer for employment as an advisor. Certainly he was an accomplished and proven organizer, and was no less skilled as an expert for military modernization. He possessed the additional asset of being a national of a country outside the "Unequal Treaty" system. But it was his ideological compatibility with the right-wing Kuomintang that has received particular attention. After the break with the Communists in the spring of 1927, the right-wing KMT did have a remarkably similar ideological stance to that of the right-radical elements after the war in Germany. The legacy of Sun Yat-sen's "Three People's Principles" had been the ideological fragmentation of the KMT, with various factions professing to be the correct interpreters and heirs. For our purposes, the views of the Western Hills Conference Group and the Sun Yat-senist Society⁵⁶ seem to be the most closely compatible with both the views of Chiang Kai-shek after his swing to the right and those of the German radical-right. The emphasis, in China as in Germany, was on resisting alien foreign influences, that is, any thought that was not firmly rooted in the national "soul" of the nation. These influences that had to be shunned were cultural as well as political, and the task was to effect a "rebirth" of the cultural heritage of the nation. The national culture would be "restored" in the context of a hierarchically organized authoritarian structure, emphasizing the organic nature of the state, and the new society would provide due and proper place to the "ancient" national customs and

⁵⁵BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 31. Of course the possibility always exists that Li Chi-shen was acting in concert with Chiang Kai-shek.

⁵⁶See Isaacs, 76ff.

morality.

As for Chiang Kai-shek's ideological stance, he stressed the organic state, and equated the Party with the State.. He accepted "Sun Yat-sen's concept of political tutelage with the corollary of one-party government."⁵⁷ Strongly imbued with Confucian principles regarding the efficacy of moral example in swaying the people, Chiang Kai-shek emphasized the traditional Confucian virtues of decorum, righteousness, integrity, and "sense of shame," a viewpoint that corresponded closely with Bauer's distaste for modernity. Chiang Kai-shek's thought went beyond Confucian moral principles, though, to accept the metaphysical concepts of Neo-Confucianism. For example, human nature was equated with heavenly reason requiring that the highest goal was to keep one's self pure of selfish desires or external attractions. Thus, by accepting these precepts and that regarding the organic nature of the people, Chiang Kai-shek saw his task as a revival of the national "soul" of China, a revival founded on moral reorganization. In turn, this would be established on the rejection of foreign ideas or theories; only that thought which had roots in the organic history of the Chinese nation could grow and flourish.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Chester C. Tan, *Chinese Political Thought in the Twentieth Century* (Garden City, New York, 1971), 163. The remainder of the paragraph is based on *ibid.*, Chapter VI, 162-176, "Chiang Kai-shek."

⁵⁸ The recent study of Lloyd E. Eastman, "Fascism in Kuomintang China: The Blue Shirts," *The China Quarterly*, No. 49 (Jan.-Mar., 1972), 1-31, contributes important new evidence on Chinese "fascism," and on Chiang Kai-shek's post-1931 relationship with the "Blue Shirts." Eastman states that the fundamental ideological conviction of the "Blue Shirts" was that the "pernicious influences of Western culture were the root cause of China's moral and cultural bankruptcy," particularly the "baneful effects of western liberalism" (meaning "individualism"). Certainly this opposition to western thought (which had been increasingly gaining ground in China) gave the "Blue Shirts" common ground with the contemporary German radical-right.

Certainly the similarities with certain elements of German conservative thought reaching back to the middle of the nineteenth century,⁵⁹ as well as that of Bauer and much of the radical-right in post-1918 Germany are striking.⁶⁰ It seems that the element common to both Bauer's and Chiang Kai-shek's ideological framework was the twentieth century reaction in many countries against the "hegemony" of the West and the penetration of western thought and technology, i.e., the reaction against the on-going process of "modernization."⁶¹ Besides this "ideological" connection however, there were additional reasons for the right-wing Nationalists to turn to the circles around Ludendorff for advisors to replace the Russians. Given the long-standing Chinese respect for German military talents (and the added bonus that Germany was without extraterritoriality), the hostility to Weimar demonstrated by the right-radical elements meant that they would ignore the wishes of the German government regarding employment of military advisors in China. After all, the Chinese in the past often had expressed a desire to German government officials to hire German ex-officers.

Bauer left Germany on October 6, 1927 for China. Sailing from Genoa on the 8th, he travelled via Suez and arrived in Hong Kong on November 14 where he was warmly received by two officials of the Canton

⁵⁹Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Garden City, New York, 1965).

⁶⁰See esp. Schüddekopf, *Linke Leute von rechts*, passim.

⁶¹There is, of course, an unreconcilable (and ironical) contradiction here in that Bauer was engaged in bringing just such modernization to China!

government. He immediately proceeded up-river to Canton and was met there by General Li Chi-shen. Li had read a memorandum on organizational reform submitted to him previously by Bauer. Li was much impressed and it was agreed that Bauer should begin his organizational work on November 17.

However, events were to intervene. The Nationalist camp was still torn by disunity. Chiang Kai-shek was still in voluntary retirement, the new "united" Nationalist Government established in Nanking in September was without effective leadership, and the Canton regime was plagued by personal rivalries.⁶² While Bauer was at breakfast on November 17, he was informed that a *coup d'état* against Li's regime had been successfully carried out overnight by General Chang Fa-k'uei of the "Iron Division" and his chief of staff, Huang Ch'i-hsiang.

Bauer received the news quite calmly and, after discussing the situation with a few German doctors and technical people employed in Canton, decided to continue with his own studies and preparations.⁶³ He returned to Hong Kong where he discovered that Li was assembling his troops in order to drive Huang out of Canton. The dissension among the southern militarists precipitated a larger and more significant event to which Bauer also was witness. Upon his return to Canton, he found himself in the midst of the desperate communist uprising of December 11-13 known as the "Canton Commune."⁶⁴ Bauer was much impressed by the performance of the regrouped southern forces that accompanied the suppression of the

⁶²Clubb, 141-43; Isaacs, 282.

⁶³BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 27.

⁶⁴For a graphic description of the "Canton Commune," see Isaacs, 282-92.

revolt.⁶⁵

On December 15, Bauer left Canton for Shanghai, where he was received on the 23rd by Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang had returned from Japan in order to take advantage of his indispensability to the Nationalist camp and was then negotiating with Wang Ching-wei, the man who stood behind the Canton coup against Li. There is little in Bauer's papers regarding his discussions with Chiang Kai-shek except that he "received the necessary instructions regarding [his] proposals and activities."⁶⁶ One source has it that Chiang offered Bauer a position as advisor in his entourage which the German accepted only after demanding and receiving Chiang's promise that he would continue his anti-communist attitude.⁶⁷ It seems doubtful that such a formal exchange occurred, but it is likely that the two recognized a mutual compatibility in their ideological outlooks during the discussion. The following day Bauer lunched with Chiang and Professor Chu Chia-hua who had accompanied him on his first trip from Hong Kong to Shanghai and later was to play a role as liason with the advisory staff.

Bauer left Shanghai on December 29 armed with letters of introduction from both Chiang and Li in order to inspect various military facilities in the hands of the Nationalist authorities. He first visited Nanking where he was received by the highest military board in the Kuomintang government, the Nationalist Military Commission. Later he inspected the important Hankow arsenal and met with a number of influential military figures. He was back in Shanghai on January 9, 1928. The

⁶⁵BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 28-29.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 31.

⁶⁷Kreitner, 90.

situation in the Kuomintang camp now had cleared somewhat. Chiang Kai-shek had resumed control of the Nationalist forces as commander-in-chief and Chairman of the National Military Council. His alliance with Li Chi-shen was cemented by the appointment of the latter as chief of staff to the First Army of which Chiang himself was in command.

Bauer moved to Nanking in order to be closer to Chiang Kai-shek and set to work drawing up proposals.⁶⁸ He was provided with a completely outfitted office, including translators. His task was greatly eased by the arrival in January of his secretary, Fräulein Cordes, who, having been born and raised in China, spoke fluent Chinese. During this period Bauer produced a prodigious amount of memoranda on the subject of the modernization of China. His proposals ranged from the fields of heavy industry and communications to military reform. Key to his program was that all regions should progress simultaneously and that a strong central government should oversee the development,⁶⁹ an approach that surely met with Chiang's approval.

Bauer's impression of the attitude of the Chinese toward Germany is of some interest. He found them to be most accommodating and cordial and claimed that this derived from a feeling of sympathy for Germany's present plight. After all, both countries had suffered common oppression at the hands of the "imperialist states." Moreover, Bauer asserted, more than once he had been told that the Chinese admired Germany's heroic stand during the World War against a myriad of enemies. And she had not been conquered on the field of battle, only starved into submission. Many people supposedly had told him that it was time that Germany follow

⁶⁸BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 37.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, No. 39; No. 42, *passim*; PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: *Militär*, III, *passim*.

China's example in casting off the yoke of the Western powers.⁷⁰

For Bauer's part, he was full of admiration for the cleanliness and order he found in China's streets. There was no "racket (*Radau*) in the streets, no drunks, no prostitutes."⁷¹ The mass of the people at least were not affected by the concepts of "freedom" and "equality" introduced into China by students returning from Europe and America. These degenerate ideas surely could only result in the destruction of the family, a falling birthrate (?), the enervating of the man and the prostitution of woman.⁷² With this semi-Confucian view of the social order, it is not surprising that Bauer was congenial to Chiang Kai-shek.

Bauer's work in Nanking was completed at the end of February

⁷⁰BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 40. Earlier he had expressed the hope that the "growth" of nationalism, of national pride, in China, India and Latin America, as well as in Germany, signified a renewed challenge of "idealism" to the prevailing Western "capitalist materialism." See Bauer, *Der Grosse Krieg*, 298-301.

⁷¹An incredible assertion by anyone who had been to Shanghai!

⁷²BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 40. Bauer had strong opinions on the role of women in society. He was disturbed by the sight of women in his hotel wearing western clothes and dancing to Jazz music, a sign of the degeneration of China's ancient culture under the onslaught of western "Civilization." It enraged him to see women going about with cigarettes in their mouths or sitting on bar stools so one could admire their "pretty legs." This prejudice went far deeper than normal male chauvinism, however. Bauer distinguished between two formative influences in the advance of mankind, the inherent "moral-spiritual" impulses which found expression in laws, customs, and mores, and the concrete accomplishments in the "technological-economical" sphere. The development of the latter had led to the disastrous stratification of humanity into rich and poor, into the possessors and the indigent, with the former acquiring more and more and the latter being "enslaved." This process was fueled by the pervasive influence of the female, with the male striving for material gain in order to accommodate her. This was the disastrous basis of "Western" materialism, of egoism, of acquisitiveness, consequences of which had led to the "feminization of the male" and the "virilization of the female." Spiritual forces withered and "culture" degenerated. The solution lay in the reawakening of the "collective male altruistic spirit" ("*Mannesgeist*"). See his comments in *Der Grosse Krieg*, 313-14; and the analysis of Rüdts von Collenberg, 29.

1928 and he accepted another invitation from General Li Chi-shen to return to Canton. He thoroughly oriented himself on the technical and industrial possibilities for the Hong Kong-Canton region which left him optimistic about what could be accomplished in the future with proper leadership and organization.⁷³ Bauer continued to draw up proposals for the reforms he considered necessary if China ever was to stand on her own feet. His basic approach required the employment of experienced western advisors and the introduction of western organizational and technical practices. Already he had suggested to Chiang Kai-shek that since it was necessary that he return to Germany in order to secure his pension, a Chinese study mission should accompany him home.⁷⁴ The Nationalist leader agreed to this plan and the Chen Yi Study Commission was formed with the task of studying military, political, and armament questions and securing suitable advisors in Germany.⁷⁵

The Commission, consisting of Lieutenant-General Chen Yi, Major-General Li Nai, Professor Chu Chia-hua, Dr. Hsiang Ching-fang, and Colonel Bauer, embarked at Hong Kong for Europe on March 24, 1928.⁷⁶ The Wilhelmstrasse was ignorant of the details of Bauer's activities in China during the winter of 1927-1928, and only learned of the coming of the Chen Yi Commission in April 1928. Prior to departing China, Chen had visited Consul-General Thiel in Shanghai in order to request official

⁷³BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 39, 33-47.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, No. 42a, 121-22

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, No. 43, 6, Chiang Kai-shek to Bauer, March 1, 1928.

⁷⁶Kreitner, 90-91, states that Bauer drew up the military plans for the Chiang Kai-shek - Feng Yü-hsiang - Yen Hsi-shan campaign against the *tuchan* government in Peking. Bauer ostensibly watched over the deployment and then, certain of success, left China. The offensive was launched in April 1928. Clubb, 142-43.

German support for his mission, which he claimed involved studying the capabilities of German industry. Although Thiel was aware of the plans of the Kuomintang military administration to enlarge and modernize its armaments factories and was certain that this task was the main purpose of Chen's proposed visit to Germany, he cautiously recommended support. True, the Nationalists recently had made strong threats against Germany as a result of her participation in the arms traffic with the northern warlords⁷⁷ and aiding their cause might violate Germany's policy of strict neutrality in internal Chinese affairs or obligations under the Versailles Treaty. Nevertheless, sizable orders might be obtained for German industry in the reconstruction projects of the Nationalists, plans which were by no means limited to arsenal expansion.⁷⁸

It will be recalled that it was precisely at this time that the Wilhelmstrasse was considering the question of whether and when to extend recognition to the Nanking government, and therefore the arrival of the Chen Yi Commission (as well as the Sun Fo delegation) in Germany required delicate handling.⁷⁹ The Wilhelmstrasse, with the aim of continuing friendly relations with the Nationalists and after having received Chiang Kai-shek's personal request for support of the Chen Yi Commission,⁸⁰ decided to afford polite assistance to the Chinese.⁸¹ In

⁷⁷See *supra*, 160.

⁷⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, IV, Thiel (Shanghai) to AA, No. 374 (IV Chi 690) [arrived April 5, 1928], March 15, 1928; Memo Dirksen (e.o. IV Chi 1046), May 25, 1928.

⁷⁹See *supra*, 90-91.

⁸⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi; *China-Deutschland*, V, Chiang Kai-shek to Stresemann (IV Chi 1240) [arrived June 22, 1928], March 10, 1928.

⁸¹See, e.g., *ibid.*, request by the AA for the President to receive

fact, the hope was that practical and profitable results for German industry and the export trade would result. The Wilhelmstrasse was at this time confident that the Nationalists intended to employ only engineers, technicians, and administrative personnel as advisors, not military instructors.⁸²

After his return to Germany, Bauer engaged in establishing contacts between the Chen Yi party (and a further commission from Canton headed by General Chu Ho-chung)⁸³ and German industry, and in selecting suitable advisors for employment in China. Among other things, the Chinese were interested in securing German assistance in railway construction. Professor Chu Chia-hua, the expert for industrial questions with Chen Yi, held a number of discussions with representatives of Lenz & Co., the *Vereinigte Stahlwerke*, and the German *Waggonindustrie*. It was decided that a German commission should go to China in order to investigate possibilities for extending China's rail network.⁸⁴ Also, the Junkers firm was contacted with a view to involving them in the

Generals Chen Yi and Li Nai because of the military and political importance of Chiang Kai-shek in the Nanking government (zu IV Chi 1243), June 29, 1928.

⁸²*PA, Abt. IV, Po 1 Chi: Allgemeines*, private letter Trautmann to Thiel (e.o. IV Chi 1596), August 13, 1928. Rumors already were being circulated by the Japanese News Agency "Nippon Dempo" that Ludendorff would enter the service of Nanking, and that five German officers had entered China as military advisors on his instructions. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, Schoen (Tokyo) to AA, J. No. 1647 (IV Chi 1774), August 18, 1928.

⁸³*BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 47, 3-6. The two commissions agreed to coordinate their procurement efforts in order to secure price reductions.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 15-16, *Aktennotiz*, September 10, 1928.

creation of air communications for China.⁸⁵

Bauer, with his wartime experience in coordinating Germany's industrial effort, was an ideal contact man for the Chinese. During its three-month stay in Germany, the Chen Yi Commission visited many German industrial plants whose doors were opened by Bauer. Among others, the Krupp firm was interested in expanding its tool and die trade with China and was prepared to sell the Chinese an entire powder plant.⁸⁶ Even the *Ostasiatischer Verein* maintained contact with Bauer in expectation that his activities would result in increased Sino-German trade.⁸⁷

In the course of the year, Bauer produced an impressive array of memoranda for the Nanking government. A listing of the titles relating to military matters alone is instructive as to the Colonel's penchant for detail and thoroughness:

1. Military Considerations on China.
2. Military Schools for the Army.
3. General War Academy.
4. Leadership School.
5. Schools for instruction in specialized weaponry.
6. Training of Technical Officers, Doctors, etc.
7. Special School for Non-Commissioned Officers.
8. Coastal Defense of China.
9. The Organization of Contemporary Armed Forces.
10. Composition of the Army
11. The Military Rebuilding of China
12. Thoughts on the Demobilization of the Chinese Army.

⁸⁵Bauer was under the impression that he had secured from Junkers exclusive rights in China prior to his departure the previous year. *Ibid.*, 1, Bauer to Gotthard Sachsenberg, September 14, 1927; 2, Sachsenberg to Bauer, September 20, 1927. See also *infra*.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 17-19, Fritz Wilhelm (Fried. Krupp A.G.) to Bauer, September 11, 1928.

⁸⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, IV, OAV to AA (zu IV Chi 1046), June 20, 1928; BA, Nachlass Bauer, No. 49, 9, OAV to Bauer (Potsdam), October 27, 1928. The former document is a request for the AA to pass on a letter to Bauer of which no copy has been found.

He also drafted plans for the reconstruction of China's transportation systems, the setting up of an air communication network, the refurbishing of the postal and telegraph systems, constructing canals, establishing a chemical and heavy industrial capacity, reforming agriculture, enlarging the mining industry, and effecting financial reform.⁸⁸ All of this was to be accomplished with the aid of foreign advisors and capital, presumably with Germany playing the predominant role.

Bauer even had the temerity to involve himself with Chinese internal political questions, sending Chiang Kai-shek a memorandum on constitutional reform. The memorandum itself has been lost, but the accompanying letter is worth quoting in its entirety:⁸⁹

To General Chiang Kai-shek

Potsdam, July 24, 1928

China is now considering providing herself with a constitution. This constitution will be decisive as to whether or not China really takes a step forward or, mesmerized by the illusions which today propel most peoples of the white race, steers over the same precipice.

That it does not behoove a foreigner to lecture the Chinese people in this important question is clear, and I too do not wish to do so. However, I ask you not to take it amiss, Your Excellency, if I, because of the terrible disasters which false-democracy and false-socialism have visited on the peoples upon whom they have settled, warn of specific matters so that China may avoid these evil apparitions and progress not only in the technical sphere but, what is more important, culturally and politically as well.

In this sense, I ask you to accept with indulgence the attached memorandum.

It can be safely surmised that Bauer's proposals involved a minimum of

⁸⁸The military memoranda are in *BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 41, 54-107; others are scattered throughout Nos. 41 and 42a. Some memoranda of Bauer's also can be found in *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Borch to AA, No. 250 (IV Chi 418), *Anlagen* (Military Demobilization, Railroad Network for China), January 23, 1930.

⁸⁹*BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 43, 7.

democracy and a maximum degree of state authority.⁹⁰

One of Bauer's main tasks in Germany was to select and interview suitable advisors for employment in China. There was no dearth of applicants but Bauer exercised great care in making his selections.⁹¹ He had no qualms about hiring German nationals for the technical and administrative positions, but initially made efforts to secure non-German citizens for the military advisory posts for both the Chen Yi and Canton missions. This decision apparently was taken in light of the possible repercussions the hiring of German nationals as military advisors could have with the Japanese. Chen Yi, it seems, was so instructed by the Nanking government.⁹² Bauer planned to go to Switzerland in September with the Canton Commission to interview prospective candidates and requested that either Chen Yi or Li Nai accompany him.⁹³

⁹⁰For Bauer's concepts of "true" democracy and "true" socialism, see *Der Grosse Krieg*, 138-40, and *passim*.

⁹¹BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 43, 8-9, Bauer to Chen Yi, August 19, 1928. His selections fell mainly on individuals from radical-right circles, but without further biographical information it is impossible to identify all of them with precision. For example, it is uncertain whether Bauer's later associate in China is identical with the Hans Wendt who in 1925 wrote that the "West is dying; to the East belongs the future." Germany should back the Soviet drive to awaken the "suppressed nations" (China) against England and the West. Quoted in Schlüdekopf, *Linke Leute von rechts*, 185-86. Schlüdekopf, 453, n. 14, suspects that this Wendt is the *Oberleutnant a. D.* Hans Wendt who figured prominently in the Leipzig *Reichswehr* trial of September-October 1930. (See Peter Bucher, *Der Reichswehrprozess: Der Hochverrat der Ulmer Reichswehroffiziere 1919/1930* (Boppard am Rhein, 1967), *passim*.) Although the question remains open, it seems just as likely in view of the ideological connection with Bauer that the Wendt writing in 1925 is the Police Major who joined the advisory staff by January 1930. See Appendix G.

⁹²Lindemann, 155, asserts that in the spring of 1928 Chen Yi requested Ludendorff to take over the rebuilding of China's armed forces. This seems unlikely in view of the fact that Bauer already had won Chiang Kai-shek's respect and confidence. See also *infra*, 236-37.

⁹³BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 43, 8-9, Bauer to Chen Yi, August 19, 1928.

Bauer himself, although obviously acquainted with many high officers in the German military, apparently was *persona non grata* with the *Reichswehrministerium* under the then Minister of Defense Wilhelm Groener.⁹⁴ No evidence has come to light that Bauer approached the Defense Ministry for financial or other support, and if he had done so it undoubtedly would have been refused. In fact, Bauer later wrote from Nanking: "We don't need the help of the *Reichswehrministerium*."⁹⁵ At this time, the *Reichswehr* was cooperating with the Wilhelmstrasse in the latter's China policy, and even if the German military had been inclined to become involved in China, it is unlikely that they would have associated themselves with a notorious enemy of the Republic such as Colonel Bauer.⁹⁶

The Nanking Commission did approach the *Reichswehrministerium* with the hope of securing official German assistance in the building up of the Chinese navy. In late September 1928, a delegation from the *Marineleitung* of the Defense Ministry headed by *Kapitän-zur-See* Assmann conferred with Trautmann of the Wilhelmstrasse's East Asia desk on the question of providing assistance in marine construction and the dispatch of a naval mission to China. Trautmann laid out the current internal and external difficulties of the Nanking government and emphasized that the political interests of Germany necessitated total abstention from

⁹⁴On the attitude of the *Reichswehr* under Groener, see Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 291ff.

⁹⁵*BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 44, 88.

⁹⁶I am indebted for this paragraph to the discussion in Fox, "Max Bauer," 31.

aiding China in the development of her military power.⁹⁷ Officially, this position was accepted by the German Navy, and Nanking was therefore forced to turn elsewhere for naval assistance.⁹⁸

Despite the official reluctance of the German Navy Command to become involved, some officers, operating clandestinely, did undertake to work with Nanking in naval matters. In March 1929, Max Bauer's son, Ernst (who was now working on his father's staff), contacted Captain (later Admiral) Wilhelm Canaris with regard to the Chinese purchase of a U-boat. Canaris had been intimately involved with the German Navy's subsidized company in the Netherlands for the construction of submarines, the *Ingenieurskantoor voor Scheepsbouw*. Bauer suggested that this company could construct the submarine while the torpedoes could be fabricated at the Spanish torpedo works at Cartagena in which the German Navy also was involved.⁹⁹ The proposal was accepted and plans were drawn up for the construction of the submarine at the Dutch firm's works at Fiddjensnoord with the participation of a Chinese naval expert.¹⁰⁰ The Nanking Ministry of Marine contemplated the building of a submarine

⁹⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 14 Chi: *Marineangelegenheiten*, I, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 1909), September 27, 1928.

⁹⁸In March 1929, the Nanking government requested the dispatch of a naval mission from Great Britain. In July, the British government agreed to the request and to the training of Chinese naval cadets in England. See *Survey of International Affairs*, 1929, 300-301.

⁹⁹For details on Canaris' and the German Navy's clandestine activities in evading the disarmament provisions of Versailles, see Carsten *Reichswehr and Politics*, 242-45.

¹⁰⁰BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 49, 108-109, Ernst Bauer to Canaris, March 23, 1929; Schottsky to Ernst Bauer, n.d. Future progress of this business is unclear. By 1938 a U-boat had been completed for the Chinese, but Hitler ordered that it was not to be delivered until the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Conflict. See PA, Abt. II, Po g OA: *China-Japan Konflikt 1937*, I, Note (for Weizsäcker) (zu Pol. I 606 g. VIII), February 28, 1938.

flotilla if the first boat should prove satisfactory. Orders were also placed (it is unclear with whom) through Bauer for a 6000-ton light-cruiser, a further submarine (this one of 1000-tons), and two river gunboats.¹⁰¹

The Nanking Commission also placed orders for armaments with private firms. General Chen Yi empowered Dr. Davi Yui of the Chinese Legation in Berlin to conclude contracts for 100 Kiralyi cannon, a dozen Oerlikon artillery pieces (including 4 Flak weapons), and two 7.5 howitzers. From Junkers, three "A 35" aircraft, five aircraft engines, and an aircraft machine shop were ordered. Plans were made for future purchases of signal equipment, optical instruments, flame-throwers, and chemical warfare equipment (gas masks, fog-producing machines, etc.). All of this procurement was to be coordinated through the Trade Division of the Chinese Legation in Berlin.¹⁰²

The development of this organizational structure for the facilitation of weapons procurement in Germany was one of the more important innovations of Colonel Bauer. On the one hand, he established a "Berlin Büro" under Bernard Waurick to act on his behalf in Germany, and on the other he created a system of direct Chinese commercial representation in Europe. The Trade Section of the Chinese Legation in Berlin under the direction of Davi Yui henceforth would serve as the center of a network of Chinese trade representatives in order to coordinate

¹⁰¹BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 49, 120-24, Max Bauer to Chinese Legation, Berlin, April 15, 1929. Apparently a surplus cruiser was envisioned. In-so-far as the other purchases are concerned, it should be recalled that the "China Weapons-Trade Act" and the 1919 Arms Embargo were still in effect.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, No. 44, 1-3, Memo Chen Yi for Davi Yui, September 20, 1928.

contacts between Nanking and the firms to be employed for the reconstruction of China. Bauer implemented this scheme as the result of his admiration for a similar Soviet system and in order to by-pass the German firms having representation in China which he did not consider to be suitable to large-scale Sino-German cooperation.¹⁰³ Needless to say, his intent (as well as that of his successors) to exclude the traditional China firms from the lucrative business in the future led to a good deal of enmity from German trading interests.¹⁰⁴

These details of Bauer's and Nanking's activities of course were unknown to the public at the time, but through the summer and autumn of 1928 the press in Britain, Germany, and Japan¹⁰⁵ reported rumors that the Chinese were engaged in recruiting German military advisors for the reorganization of the Chinese army. The German Foreign Ministry was apprehensive that the Chen Yi Commission indeed intended to employ German nationals in a military capacity which would constitute a violation of Article 179 of the Versailles Treaty. There also was danger of

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, No. 41, 130-31, *Denkschrift 4: Chinesische Handelsvertretungen in Europa*, n.d.

¹⁰⁴ A later military advisor calculated the price differential between purchasing direct from the manufacturers in Europe and through the import firms in China as being approximately double, and recommended rigid adherence to centralized purchasing through the Berlin Trade Section. See MA, W 02-44/1, Memo, October 1, 1930.

¹⁰⁵ PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, V, Thiel to AA, No. 29 (IV Chi 1356), July 10, 1928; Borch to AA, No. 103 (IV Chi 1438), July 21, 1928; Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, London Observer (IV Chi 2028), October 14, 1928. The Japanese Legation Counsellor in Berlin, Shigenitsu, called on Ministerialrat von Dirksen on August 9, 1929 to ask if Germany would permit German nationals to accept employment in a military capacity in China. He pointed out the effect upon Japanese public opinion of Germans training "an instrument directed against Japan." Dirksen assured the Japanese that the German government disapproved of German nationals entering Chinese military service. PA, Handakten, Ha Pol: Handakten Ritter - China, Memo Dirksen (e.o. IV Jap 695), August 9, 1928.

complications with the Treaty Powers in China, where the Diplomatic Corps had begun to suspect that Germany aspired to be Russia's successor in that country.¹⁰⁶

Bauer had repeatedly assured the Wilhelmstrasse that there was no intention of employing German nationals as military instructors in China, with the exception of a Captain Ritter who was then teaching military history in Constantinople.¹⁰⁷ The Chen Yi Commission ostensibly was seeking only German doctors, engineers, geologists, and police and administrative personnel.¹⁰⁸

Notwithstanding Bauer's letter to Chen Yi in August 1928 on the subject of engaging Swiss officers,¹⁰⁹ there is no doubt that Bauer was not telling the Wilhelmstrasse the entire truth. It is not quite clear at what stage the decision was taken to recruit Germans as military advisors, but fixing a definite point is not important. Given Bauer's comprehensive approach to the problem of modernizing China, he saw no reason to separate advisory activities into purely military or purely civilian functions. Furthermore, it was his belief that the prime requisite for the development of a strong state was the existence of a modern and efficient military force, an obvious necessity in Nanking's case in view of the still pressing problem of attaining internal order.

This fact was not clearly understood in the Wilhelmstrasse, and

¹⁰⁶*PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, V, Borch to AA, No. 102, July 20, 1928.

¹⁰⁷It is not quite clear why Captain Ritter did not end up in China. Eventually his function was taken over by Freiherr von Wangenheim.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, Dirksen to Consulate-General Shanghai, No. 23 (zu IV Chi 1356), July 11, 1928; Dirksen to Legation Peking, No. 74 (zu IV Chi 1427), July 24, 1928; Note (zu IV Chi 1797), September 13, 1928.

¹⁰⁹See *supra*, 227.

encouraged by the information available to it in the autumn of 1928, Berlin continued to hope that Bauer was recruiting German nationals only for civilian jobs. Yet even among the first advisors who came to the attention of the Wilhelmstrasse and who could be considered as civilians,¹¹⁰ at least one, Professor Keiper, a specialist in metallurgical engineering and mining, was recruited to develop arsenal facilities and worked in that capacity in China.¹¹¹ Moreover, while in Germany Bauer made arrangements to hire military advisors; he interviewed some and, upon his return to China, left instructions to assemble the *vitas* of other candidates.¹¹² Thus the fact remains that despite all his subsequent protestations and the half-hearted attempt to secure Swiss officers, as a result of Bauer's mission from the winter of 1928-1929 on an ever increasing number of German ex-officers went to China to take up duties purely military in scope.

While the German government was uncertain as to the extent of Nanking's plans,¹¹³ the British government was not. It had received information from secret sources that the Chen Yi Commission was under instructions to employ German officers for the reorganization of the Nationalist Army. At the end of July 1928, London notified the British

¹¹⁰Ministerialrat Schubart for "town planning"; Professor Keiper for "geology"; Professor Otte for "statistics"; Professor Zanthier for "housing"; and Professor Stölzner for "telephone and telegraph matters." (Stölzner was a *Leutnant a. D.* See Appendix J.) *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militdr*, I, Memo (IV Chi 2089), October 26, 1928. See also Appendix F.

¹¹¹MA, W 02-44/9, "Liste der seit Bestehen der Beraterschaft (1.11.28) ausgeschiedenen Berater," 95. See Appendix G.

¹¹²BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 44, 9. This is a copy of a telegram from Bauer to Berlin that he now was ready to have the *vitas* sent to him.

¹¹³Fox, "Max Bauer," 34, states that the German Foreign Ministry may have been "wilfully ignorant" of the extent of Bauer's activities. This seems strained.

Minister in Peking, Sir Miles Lampson, that the Chen Yi Commission was under instructions from Nanking to engage five or six German officers for the construction of aircraft, a similar number to instruct on the manufacture of military equipment, shells, and explosives, a couple of engineering officers, and a number of logistics experts. According to this information, Chen Yi himself had drawn up a detailed scheme for the creation of a new army and the reform of the old which involved extensive German industrial cooperation and reliance upon German military advisors. At the end of August, the British Military Attaché in Peking reported that he had been informed by his French colleague that Bauer was authorized to employ twenty military instructors for the Nationalist Army.¹¹⁴ The British government decided to keep a close watch on Chen Yi's activities, but not to pursue the matter under Article 179 of the Versailles Treaty.¹¹⁵ Whether the British intelligence was based upon hard evidence or was mere speculation, it approximated the truth much more closely than did the Wilhelmstrasse's estimation of Nanking's intentions.

Up to this point, the Wilhelmstrasse, although regarding Bauer's activities with a jaundiced eye, had not exerted itself very much to forestall the possible complications which could arise from German military involvement in China. Except for a few warnings regarding Berlin's position in the matter, apparently no steps were taken to obtain more accurate information or to ascertain precisely what Bauer and the

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, 34-35. Fox's discussion is based on material from the British Foreign Office archives.

¹¹⁵Fox quotes an interesting sentence from the Foreign Office's memo on this matter: "The Treaty of Versailles imposes no obligation on this country to protest if for political reasons it is deemed to be undesirable to do so." *Ibid.*, 35. See also *supra*, 196, n. 1.

Chinese were up to. This perhaps can be attributed to the desire to enlarge Sino-German economic relations, but once the Bauer affair was seized upon by the press, the Wilhelmstrasse found that the image it had been carefully cultivating with regard to Germany's policy toward China was threatened, and that there were two sides to the coin of German-Nanking cooperation.

CHAPTER VII

THE WILHELMSTRASSE AND THE EXPANSION OF THE ADVISORY STAFF

1928-1929

Late in October 1928, as Bauer was in the process of wrapping up his business in Germany and preparing to return to China to take up the position of chief military advisor to Chiang Kai-shek, the press in Europe and Asia once more began to take an interest in his activities. From this point forward, Berlin found it ever more difficult to convince the world press that it had no interest in being Soviet Russia's successor in China. The military mission in the camp of Chiang Kai-shek disturbed relations with other Chinese regimes, aroused the suspicion of other powers, notably Japan, and focused the attention of public opinion upon the incongruous situation of a German government professing opposition to German military advisors in China while the advisory staff grew in numbers and arms sales increased in volume.

On October 14, the London *Observer* reported that Nanking had offered a position as chief military advisor to General Ludendorff.¹ Although this report apparently was spurious it did evoke a reaction in Germany. A few days later the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* refuted the assertion in an article which confirmed that Chen Yi had visited

¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, *The Observer*, "Chinese Offer to Ludendorff," (IV Chi 2028), October 14, 1928.

Ludendorff, but only to transmit greetings from Chiang Kai-shek.² These initial stories were only stabs in the dark, but a few weeks later more concrete information was available. A press report from Shanghai of October 25,³ presumably the result of a leak in Nationalist Chinese circles, to the effect that Bauer had been engaged by the Nanking government to reorganize the Chinese army triggered a "press campaign"⁴ by English papers in China and in Britain itself against his employment. *The Times* headlined on October 26, "German Adviser for Nanking," and in the accompanying story stated that Bauer, "Ludendorff's right-hand man," had been appointed military and commercial advisor to the Nanking government and had gathered a staff of officers in Germany to accompany him to China. Prominence in this story was given to Bauer's right-wing activities in the Kapp *Putsch* and after, his contacts with Hitler and the Nazis, and particularly to his association with the so-called "Eastern School" - a group of "national bolshevists" in Germany who "dreamed wildly of cooperation with Soviet Russia in a war of revenge against the Western Powers."⁵ The *Manchester Guardian* of the same date repeated much the same story, and assessed the number of German officers engaged for military or police duty by Nanking at some thirty. This paper also stated that Bauer's employment was connected with the "big bid Germany

²*Ibid.*, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 16, 1928.

³BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 55, 1.

⁴PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 2089), October 26, 1928.

⁵*Ibid.*, *The Times* (London), October 26, 1928.

is making to recapture her pre-war influence and trade in China."⁶ The *Daily Telegraph* headlined the major fear in Britain: "German Influence: Officers for the Army."⁷

In China, the English-oriented *North China Daily News* reported essentially the same particulars (with the interesting but unsubstantiated additional information that Dr. Sun Yat-sen had sought General Ludendorff's assistance already in 1923 for the reorganization of the Kuomintang army).⁸ The *Daily News*, reflecting its stance as the spokesman for British trading interests in China, claimed that Bauer was backed by large German industrial cartels which were prepared to take over the management of various enterprises for the Nationalists. The campaign reached such a magnitude that Germany's obligations under Article 179 of the Versailles Treaty were repeatedly mentioned, and the query was raised (by *The Times*) whether some members of the League of Nations might draw attention to its violation.⁹

The French press picked up the theme as well. The radical newspaper, *Homme Libre*, claimed that Bauer was taking an entire military and technical staff with him to China with the intention of bringing the industry of China under German control. It saw the inauguration of a German-Chinese conspiracy which other powers with interests in China would

⁶*Ibid.*, *Manchester Guardian*, October 26, 1928.

⁷*Ibid.*, *Daily Telegraph*, October 26, 1928.

⁸BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 55, 19, *North China Daily News*, October 25, 1928.

⁹Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 162.

do well to watch closely.¹⁰ Another French paper spoke of "German penetration" of China.¹¹ And predictably another, *Le Journal*, brought up the question of German violation of Article 179 of the Versailles Treaty.¹²

The German press also became highly agitated. The stir caused abroad by the news of Colonel Bauer's appointment was highly publicized in Germany and was accompanied by a barrage of press opinions denying or decrying the reports.¹³ The *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which was working closely in this matter with the Wilhemstrasse, announced it had been authorized by Bauer to state that "neither has he been appointed advisor to the Chinese National Government nor at all employed by the Chinese government." Further, certainly no former German officers had been employed by Nanking.¹⁴ This line was spread by the German Transocean News Service and generally was followed by the majority of the newspapers in Germany. The *Berliner Tageblatt* (democratic) called the press reports of Bauer's engagement "thoroughly inaccurate." The *Preussische Kreuz-Zeitung* asserted that the foreign press was reporting the ostensible

¹⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, *Berliner Tageblatt*, "Oberst Bauers Chinafahrt," October 26, 1928.

¹¹*Ibid.*, *Berliner Volkszeitung*, October 26, 1928.

¹²*Ibid.*, *Le Journal*, October 31, 1928.

¹³See, e.g., *ibid.*, *Berliner Volkszeitung*, *Berliner Tageblatt*, *Kölnische Zeitung*, *Hamburger Nachrichten*, *Deutsche Tageszeitung* for the week of October 26-31, 1928.

¹⁴BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 55, *North China Daily News*, Transocean Report, "Appointment of Colonel Bauer," October 27, 1928. Upon the inception of the foreign press campaign, Trautmann of the East Asia desk had discussed the situation with Herr Strewe of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and they concurred that it would be best to let the news reach the German public simply as a telegram from German Foreign Ministry sources in Peking, rather than through the British press agencies. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 2089), October 26, 1928.

¹⁵BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 55, *Berliner Tageblatt*, October 26, 1928.

hiring of German ex-officers with the motive of disrupting the cordial German-Chinese relations. It was all a pack of lies - Bauer was now in Nanking (he wasn't) and living as a private citizen "with no connection at all with the Chinese General Staff."¹⁶ The *Deutsche Tageszeitung* repeated the contention that Bauer was simply living as a private citizen in China.¹⁷

German press treatment of the Bauer affair was colored by domestic political partisanship. Whereas the conservative press refused to admit the validity of the reports, the leftist press was quick to accept the assertions at face value. The liberal-leaning *Vossische Zeitung* asserted that the news of Bauer's employment had been confirmed in Berlin (but did not mention by which office or source), and expressed concern about possible repercussions.¹⁸ The Social Democrat newspaper *Vorwärts* captioned its story "Kappisten in China."¹⁹ The *Berliner Volkszeitung* wished Bauer and his rumored companions good riddance and expressed the hope that this would be the beginning of a mass emigration of reactionary militarists.²⁰

All of this was highly disturbing to the Wilhelmstrasse. The hints about German violations of the Versailles Treaty and the possibility of the question being raised in the League of Nations (which was

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, *Preussische Kreuz-Zeitung*, October 27, 1928.

¹⁷ *PA*, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, "Oberst Bauer als Privatmann in China," October 27, 1928.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, *The Times* (London), October 26, 1928.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, *Vorwärts*, October 26, 1928.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, *Berliner Volkszeitung*, "Auf nach China!", October 26, 1928.

characterized by the *Berliner Tageblatt* as "grotesque")²¹ raised just those spectres which Berlin had been striving to avoid in its policy toward employment of German officers in China. Bauer, perhaps recognizing the difficult position in which he had placed the Wilhelmstrasse with his activities and wishing to avoid a confrontation, on leaving Germany had the following declaration delivered to the Foreign Ministry for publication if it so chose:

Declaration

Potsdam, 26 October 1928

With respect to the malicious and tendenciously distorted reports in the foreign press as well as those appearing in our own democratic and left-leaning papers, I herewith declare:

- 1) I am not in any way, militarily or otherwise, in the service of the Chinese government, nor have I any contractual agreement;
- 2) I am working in China in the interests of German industry and science for the economic reconstruction of the country and in furtherance of Sino-German friendship, not for financial or political gain but only from a sense of duty;
- 3) I have neither the right to recruit advisors for China nor am I able to make decisions in such matters. It is however correct that my advice has been solicited with regard to certain individuals;
- 4) According to my knowledge, there are no German officers in Nanking, Shanghai, or Canton, and moreover no one has concluded a contract with the Chinese government relating to military affairs. I cannot guarantee that somebody has²² not been recruited behind my back, but I do not believe so.

It is difficult to see what Bauer hoped to gain from this declaration (which was tendencious in almost every particular) unless he hoped that the Wilhelmstrasse might take a less jaundiced view of his activities if

²¹*Ibid.*, *Berliner Tageblatt*, "Die 'Mission' des Obersten Bauer in China," October 28, 1928.

²²BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 45, 3, October 26, 1928; PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: *Militär*, I, Bauer to Michelsen (IV Chi 2106), October 27, 1928.

he provided it with a document which could excuse its inaction on the basis of non-awareness of Bauer's true task. Perhaps the Colonel hoped this move might facilitate his passage back to China.

The Foreign Ministry did not receive Bauer's declaration until October 29, after the Colonel had already left Germany for China. But the Wilhelmstrasse already had taken steps to minimize the repercussions that might ensue in Britain from the press campaign and also to terminate the Bauer problem. On October 25, Berlin had instructed its London Embassy to reply to any possible *démarche* along the lines of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* denial of Bauer's appointment by Nanking: he had not been named an advisor to the Nationalist government, he was not engaged by Nanking in any capacity, and there were no German nationals working on military affairs in Nanking.²³ Further, the Peking Legation was informed of the hostile attitude adopted in England toward Bauer and the Chen Yi Commission and instructed to contact Chiang Kai-shek directly and persuade him to renounce employing Bauer. The Chinese leader was to be told that even if Bauer was engaged in purely industrial advisory work, the English would continue to view him in the light of his previous military and right-radical character and therefore China simply would be creating difficulties for herself with Britain. Moreover, Germany would be very grateful if Chiang would prevent Bauer from returning to China not only because of the English attitude, but because of domestic complications as well.²⁴

²³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, AA to Embassy London, No. 43 (e.o. IV Chi 2078), October 25, 1928.

²⁴*Ibid.*, AA to Legation Peking, No. 105 (zu IV Chi 2085), October 26, 1928.

The Foreign Ministry also moved to disarm domestic critics. The East Asia desk authored an article about Bauer's activities in which his international adventures were emphasized. He had finally turned up in China, but distinctly in the capacity of a private individual for whom the German government could hardly be expected to assume responsibility. This article was sent to Dr. Mohr of the *Ostasiatischer Verein* with instructions to publish it over his name in the journal of the *Verband für den Fernen Osten*, the *Ostasiatische Rundschau*, and to keep the Foreign Ministry's involvement strictly secret.²⁵

Bauer had departed for China via Siberia on October 27, leaving Wurick and the "Berlin Büro" behind to continue the assembling of an advisory staff and the purchasing of armaments. He arrived in Shanghai from Dairen on November 13 and there once again protested his innocence of being employed by Nanking in a military capacity. In an interview with George Sokolsky of the *North China Daily News* he reiterated that he had no contract with the Nationalist government, nor was he connected with its General Staff or Ministry of War. He claimed that he had come to China solely as the personal advisor for industrial affairs to Chiang Kai-shek. It was not his military expertise that interested the Chinese leader, he said, but his experience gained during the First World War in mobilizing the economic and industrial resources of Germany. Bauer

²⁵*Ibid.*, Trautmann to Mohr (zu IV Chi 2106), October 27, 1928. The article was published in the *Ostasiatische Rundschau*, IX, on November 1, 1928 and is relied upon by Dr. Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 162, in his discussion of the affair. The Japanese approached the German representative at the League of Nations, asserting that Bauer's activities in China violated Article 179 of the Versailles Treaty. He was sent this article in response to his plea for more information on Bauer. See *PA, Referat Völkербund, China*, I, private letter Renthe-Fink (Geneva) to Weizsäcker (Vbd. 3093), November 23, 1928; private letter Weizsäcker to Renthe-Fink (zu Vbd. 3093), November 23, 1928.

ridiculed the idea that he would be engaged in general staff work. China could have no general staff until she had a national army, and she could have no national army without an industrial base. It would be his task to create this necessary prerequisite, a task that would take many years.²⁶ At the same time a statement was also issued from Chiang Kai-shek's headquarters that Bauer was engaged solely as an industrial advisor and would have no participation whatsoever in the military affairs of China.²⁷

On the morning of November 14, Bauer called on the German Consul-General in Shanghai, Thiel, and assured him that the six advisors who had accompanied him to China would be working on "civilian" tasks only. Their chief concern would be in the area of founding key industries and in creating a transportation and communication network. In the next breath however Bauer informed Thiel that through his mediation plans were being worked out in Germany for the construction of large, modern arsenals in China, projects which he pointed out were not specifically forbidden by the Versailles Treaty.²⁸ Bauer may have been technically correct, but the involvement of German firms in developing China's military strength not only violated the spirit of the Versailles armament restrictions, but the Wilhelmstrasse's policy of avoiding complications with Japan by assuring that country that Germany would not interest herself in this area. The Foreign Ministry was sufficiently alarmed at this report to caution

²⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, Legation Peking to AA, No. 2809) (IV Chi 2330), Anlage 2 (clipping from *North China Daily News*, November 15, 1928), November 19, 1928.

²⁷*Ibid.*, Anlage 3 (*North China Daily News*, November 20, 1928).

²⁸PA, Abt. Geh. Akt., Russland-Handakten, Russland-China, I, Thiel to AA, No. 59 (*geheim*, IV Chi 2235), November 14, 1928.

the Ministry of Economics that the erection of arsenals in China was contrary to the political interests of Germany and not to approve any export credits or deficit-guarantees for the delivery of such machinery.²⁹

During the winter of 1928-1929, Berlin followed the activities of Colonel Bauer closely, and as evidence mounted came to realize that, notwithstanding Bauer's repeated protestations, he indeed was engaged in establishing a German military mission in China. Early in the new year, it was learned that a former general staff officer, Major (ret.) Freiherr von Wangenheim,³⁰ was leaving his advisory post in Constantinople to join Bauer's staff in China.³¹ Rumors also reached the Wilhelmstrasse that the Chinese government was planning to hire some 30-40 inactive German ex-officers as military advisors.³² These points were brought up in a conversation with Davi Yui on January 10, 1929 and the Foreign Ministry's firm opposition to such plans was underlined. The Chinese diplomat

²⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, I, AA to RWiM (zu IV Chi 2235), November 16, 1928.

³⁰It seems likely that this officer is identical with the "Colonel" Freiherr von Wangenheim, *Reichswehr* commander in Hamburg, dismissed from the army in 1920 for siding with the Kapp Putschists. See Gordon, *Reichswehr*, 128, 136; Meier-Welcker, 272.

³¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Legation Peking to AA, No. 3342 (IV Chi 192), January 4, 1929. See also *Anlage* 1, Consulate Nanking report, No. J. 291, December 18, 1928.

³²The subject later was raised in the British House of Commons. Foreign Secretary Chamberlain stated that the British Government was watching the situation but was not yet in a position to state with assurance that the German advisors were fulfilling a military role. U.S. National Archives Microfilm Publications, T-120, Roll 5620, Serial L1525, Frame Numbers L460046-48 [hereafter cited as T-120/5620/L1525/L460046-48], "Weekly Report of Referat IV Chi for 20-26 January 1929." This of course contradicted private information in the possession of the British government. See Chapter VI, *supra*.

denied that anything of the sort was contemplated by Nanking, and also stated that Wangenheim was to be given solely administrative duties.³³

The Wilhelmstrasse was dubious about Yui's explanations and by early February its suspicions had been confirmed. Not only was Bauer giving weekly lectures on military matters to high Chinese officers, including Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang,³⁴ but an instruction battalion had been formed which would be trained under the direction of Major von Wangenheim in the use of the newest weaponry.³⁵ It was also learned that Bauer had hired a certain Dr. Metzener (sometimes spelled Metzner) for service with the Nationalist government. Metzener was known to be a specialist in the manufacture of poison gases, and he had been employed in this function in Japan following the war.³⁶

Early in March 1929, in a conversation with Dr. Kaumann, a representative of Siemssen, China, recently returned from China and who was involved in competition with Bauer,³⁷ the Wilhelmstrasse learned further uncomfortable details about Bauer's activities. Further, Herr Salzmann of the *Vossische Zeitung* expected the renewed outbreak of a press campaign in the English press as soon as sufficiently compromising evidence of Bauer's activities had been assembled, and had warned his

³³PA, *Bü St. S. Chi*, IV, Memo (IV Chi 73), January 10, 1929.

³⁴PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, II, Legation Peking to AA, No. 115 (IV Chi 255), January 14, 1929.

³⁵*Ibid.*, Legation Peking to AA, No. 364 (IV Chi 412), *Anlage 1* (Consulate-General Shanghai to Legation Peking, No. 79, January 25, 1929), February 4, 1929.

³⁶*Ibid.*, Memo [re discussion with Dr. Linde, Secretary-General of the *Verband für den Fernen Osten*] (zu IV Chi 255), February 2, 1929. It should perhaps be recalled that Chang Tso-lin and Feng Yü-hsiang in 1925 had attempted to secure Foreign Ministry mediation in hiring gas-experts.

³⁷See *infra*, 250; and Chapter IX.

employers, the Ullstein concern, that it would be prudent for the German press to disavow Bauer's mission before the storm broke.³⁸ There now remained no doubt in the Foreign Ministry that Bauer's role in Nanking extended far beyond simply advising the Chinese in industrial expansion and modernization.

On March 7, 1929, the Wilhelmstrasse summarized all it knew about Bauer's activities and informed Stresemann in Geneva about the potential danger of France and Britain charging Germany with violation of the Versailles Treaty. It was feared in the Wilhelmstrasse that raising of the subject of German military advisors in China might direct the Allies' attention to the activities of German military advisors elsewhere, including those German ex-officers who were serving with Berlin's tacit consent in Latin America.³⁹ Permission was requested from Stresemann to inform the Chinese Legation in Berlin of the German government's opposition to the employment of German ex-officers and that all steps at Berlin's disposal would be taken to prevent their departure from Germany.⁴⁰

Berlin's concern was well-founded - Bauer was in fact expanding the advisory staff after having received Chiang Kai-shek's approval early in December 1928.⁴¹ By March 1929, he had engaged some sixteen military

³⁸PA, *Abteilung II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, III, Memo Lautenschlager (IV Chi 525), March 6, 1929.

³⁹Additional research is necessary to establish Berlin's relationship with the German military advisors in Latin America, although it seems likely that the motive for the Wilhelmstrasse's approval of their activities was to encourage German trade and commerce in the region.

⁴⁰PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, II, AA to Stresemann (Geneva), no No., (zu IV Chi 192, 255, 412), March 7, 1929; *Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, III, Note Frohwein, March 8, 1929.

⁴¹BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 49, 96.

experts who either had arrived in China or were in transit,⁴² and was contemplating hiring others specifically for purely military duties in general staff work or instructing in the training battalion.⁴³ For their part, the Chinese themselves had engaged two German high ranking officers for teaching posts at the War Academy in Peiping,⁴⁴ Generalmajor a. D. Erich Gudowius⁴⁵ and Generalleutnant a. D. Fritz Lindemann.⁴⁶ Further, the purchasing of aircraft, weapons, and naval equipment from Germany was accelerated during the early spring of 1929,⁴⁷ reflecting the termination

⁴²*Ibid.*, No. 44, 79-80, Bauer to Davi Yui, March 1, 1929. See Appendices F-J for names and employment dates of the military advisory personnel.

⁴³BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 44, 79-80, and No. 49, 96 & RS., "Betrifft weitere Experten," March 17, 1929.

⁴⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Memo Lautenschlager (IV Chi 551), March 2, 1929. In May 1929, the Chinese wished to employ four further officers for teaching purposes at the Peiping War Academy and requested nominations from the Wilhelmstrasse. The latter emphasized that it had not altered in its opposition to German nationals fulfilling military roles in China, which included instruction at a military college. PA, Po 5 Chi: Innere Politik, Parlaments- und Parteiwesen, XIII, Memo Lautenschlager [re conversation with Chinese chargé d'affaires Lone Liang] (e.o. IV Chi 1140), May 25, 1929.

⁴⁵The name is spelled erroneously in various ways in the documents (Gudovius, Gudovious). In 1923, Colonel Gudowius had defended successfully the Kùlstrin fortress against a "Black Reichswehr" *Putsch* in which another later China advisor, Captain Walter Stennes (of whom more below), played a significant role. See Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 168-72; Gordon, *Reichswehr*, 234; Meier-Welcker, 377-78.

⁴⁶Meier-Welcker, 650, gives Lindemann's rank as "General der Kavallerie a. D." Lindemann was linked to the advisory group until 1932. In 1933 he accepted a two-year advisory appointment with the current Canton regime. At the end of his contract he returned to Peiping to take up residence, subsequently travelling widely in Japan and South-East Asia. His acceptance in 1936 of a position with General Sung Che-yuan, Chairman of the Hopei-Chahar Political Council, threatened to upset German-Japanese relations. Lindemann subsequently withdrew his services by order of Defense Minister Blomberg. See his memoirs, *Im Dienste Chinas*, 502ff.; and Weinberg, 339-40.

⁴⁷See BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, Nos. 44, 47, & 49, *passim*.

of the 1919 Arms Embargo.⁴⁸

The purchasing of aircraft highlights some of the confusion that surrounded the establishment of the advisory staff during 1928-1929. Bauer was under the impression that he was to be the sole agent for Junkers in China,⁴⁹ but airplane purchasing from Germany was also being conducted by two other German nationals in China - Herr Kaumann, an employee of Siemssen, China (agent for Junkers) and August Haensel, an employee of the Nanking Ministry of Marine. Haensel, who previously had worked for *Lufthansa*, initially had been hired in the summer of 1928 by the Chinese as a naval flying advisor, but subsequently engaged in promoting the sale through himself of German aircraft in China.⁵⁰ At the same time, *Lufthansa*

⁴⁸ Bauer welcomed the termination of the embargo in a letter to Nationalist Foreign Minister C. T. Wang, observing that its end would avoid any difficulty with the Treaty Powers over prospective armament shipments planned from the Netherlands and Switzerland. Also it meant that henceforth Nanking would be able to insist on its exclusive right to control all arms traffic to China and presumably facilitate the realization of the centralized purchasing system he envisaged in Berlin. Bauer did not mention the German Weapons-Trade Act which his schemes violated. (It also lapsed at the end of the month, although of course he had no knowledge that this was intended by Berlin.) See *ibid.*, No. 49, Bauer to Foreign Minister [Wang], April 19, 1929.

⁴⁹ See *supra*, 225, n. 85.

⁵⁰ PA, Abt. II, Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien, II, Legation Peking to AA (II F 2953), Anlage 1 (Consul-General Thiel (Shanghai) Report, No. 950, July 20, 1928), July 31, 1928. Haensel, thought to be a representative of Heinkel, was also suspected by the Foreign Ministry of being an agent of the German Transportation Ministry. The Wilhelmstrasse therefore warned the latter that the employment of German nationals as flying instructors with the Chinese Navy was against policy. If any contact did exist between Haensel and German officialdom it should not be made public for political reasons. *Ibid.*, AA to Reichsverkehrsministerium (zu II F 2953), November 7, 1928. The Wilhelmstrasse found itself in an ambiguous position in this matter: on the one hand it opposed German nationals fulfilling military roles in China, and on the other hand support of aircraft sales to China was part of its trade policy. See Chapter X, *infra*.

was attempting to reach an agreement with Nanking for the development of a domestic aviation network in China. The efforts by the various agents of the German aircraft industry and the export firm Siemssen ultimately led to the sale of two Junkers "F 13,"⁵¹ six "A 35," twenty Fokke-Wulf "Kiebitz," and 6 "Raab" planes to Nanking. Further, Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang purchased three Junkers "W 33" aircraft through Kaumann, the representative with Siemssen in China.⁵² The only aircraft purchased through the Trade Division of the Chinese Legation in Berlin and Bauer's efforts were the three Junkers "A 35" previously ordered by Chen Yi.

All of this was highly disturbing to Colonel Bauer. He had informed Professor Junkers of the details as they became available to him, and began to suspect the firm of double-dealing.⁵³ As his main desire was to secure exclusive control by the channel which he had developed for the purchasing of armaments in Germany, he protested strongly to Junkers about the activities of Kaumann and recommended to Nanking that negotiations with *Lufthansa* be terminated.⁵⁴ He bent every effort to coordinate all weapons procurement through the centralized purchasing agency of the Legation in Berlin, an aim however which never was realized because of the inability of Nanking to totally unify China. Nevertheless, the growth in armament trade carried on through this channel ultimately awakened an

⁵¹A passenger aircraft developed in 1919, which could however be adapted to military bombing usage. See Karl Heinz Völker, *Die Entwicklung der Militärischen Luftfahrt in Deutschland 1920-1933* (Stuttgart, 1962), 158-60.

⁵²PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien, Memo, December 19, 1928; BA, Nachlass Bauer, No. 49, 111-13, Bauer to Trade Division of Chinese Legation, Berlin, March 26, 1929.

⁵³See BA, Nachlass Bauer, No. 47, 79ff.

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, No. 49, 111-13, Bauer to Trade Division of Chinese Legation, Berlin, March 26, 1929.

an interest on the part of the *Reichswehr* toward the military staff in China.⁵⁵

Many of these details were of course unknown to the Wilhelmstrasse at the time, but by the end of February 1929, enough evidence had accumulated to convince Berlin that Bauer had lied earlier about the scope of his endeavors in China. The Peking Legation was instructed therefore to move to stop the continuing enlistment of German ex-officers for service with the Nationalist government. On March 5, 1929, Counsellor of Legation Wagner, who had travelled to Nanking for this express purpose, discussed the matter with Colonel Bauer and challenged him that reports in the possession of Berlin directly contradicted his previous assurances. Bauer replied with a long monologue to the effect that he was not directly involved in the employment of the advisors. True, Chiang Kai-shek had solicited his advice on the training of a "reliable" body of troops, which could be regarded more as a "Gendarmerie" or a "police force" than a military unit, but what could he do? It was not his fault that the Chinese had turned to Germany for the necessary instructors. The whole affair was being handled by the Trade Section of the Chinese Legation in Berlin and was the pet project of the new Minister in Berlin, Chiang Tso-ping.⁵⁶ In any event, no thought could be given to providing China with a modern army before the course of about thirty years. If reform of the general

⁵⁵See Chapter IX, *infra*.

⁵⁶Chiang Tso-ping was a personal associate of Chiang Kai-shek and it was thought at the time that his appointment to Berlin was the result of the Chinese leader needing a reliable representative there to handle the employment of German officers. Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 169. Trautmann had discussed Bauer's activities with Chiang Tso-ping in February, and emphasized the Wilhelmstrasse's dislike of the hiring of German ex-officers. Chiang Tso-ping denied any knowledge of such activities. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, II, Memo Lautenschlager (IV Chi 442), February 23, 1929.

staff should be proposed to him, Bauer claimed, he would reply that even the best organized Chinese general staff would be a head without a body or limbs. Any assertions that he was assisting in creating a Chinese army were simply nonsense.⁵⁷

The extent and brazenness of Bauer's misrepresentations (to use a more polite term than lying) about his activities can only be attributed to his belief that Berlin was totally wrong in its China policy. He never tired of pointing out that he and the German advisory staff in China were struggling against powerful forces (presumably meaning the American orientation of most of the civilian Ministries in the Nanking government) to win confidence for Germany and thereby markets for her industry. It was only after China (by which he meant the Nationalists) had become convinced of Germany's true friendship that the influence of America and her money could be transcended. Bauer saw himself in the vanguard of this struggle, fighting without even the diplomatic support or cooperation of his own country. In February, Bauer had written in this vein to Trautmann and at the same time bitterly charged that the press campaign against him and his activities had not originated in English or Japanese circles, but with the German trading firms in Berlin.⁵⁸ The German diplomat replied that although the Foreign Ministry sympathized

⁵⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Legation Peking to AA, No. 963 (IV Chi 757), Anlage 1 (Memo Wagner, March 5, 1929), March 19, 1929. The most patent prevarications in this memorandum are underlined and punctuated with exclamation points in heavy red pencil.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, personal letter Bauer to Trautmann (IV Chi 814), February 26, 1929. [Received from the hand of Ernst Bauer, April 10, 1929.] The following day, Ernst Bauer wrote to his mother that support for the Colonel's activities in China could not be expected from the "Auswärtigen Angst." BA, Nachlass Bauer, No. 50, Ernst Bauer to his mother, April 11, 1929.

with his economic schemes, it had not and would not alter its opposition to his military endeavors: "Your 'police activities' are causing us to have many headaches."⁵⁹ Bauer's son, Ernst, now employed with the Chinese Trade Section in Berlin, was told firmly that the press campaign was not initiated in Berlin, and that any attention drawn to his father's role in China was the result of Bauer's own activities.⁶⁰

In China, Wagner also brought up the matter of German military advisors with Nationalist Foreign Minister C.T. Wang and requested that Nanking abstain from employing German nationals for that purpose. Wang "listened with interest" but refused to take any position in the matter, saying solely that he would pass on the information to suitable ears.⁶¹ The Foreign Ministry simultaneously presented the Chinese Legation in Berlin with an *Aide Mémoire* to the effect that not only could Germany not permit her nationals to accept military employment with the Nanking government, but that it henceforth would actively work to prevent former German officers from taking up such positions.⁶²

In the spring of 1929, the outbreak of renewed conflict in China and the suspected participation of the German advisory staff in the fighting once again attracted the attention of the British and American

⁵⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Minute Trautmann (zu IV Chi 814), April 20, 1929.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, Memo Trautmann (zu IV Chi 814), April 11, 1929. For a further exposition of Bauer's views on the Wilhelmstrasse's China-policy, see BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 45, 147-50, Bauer to Waurick, April 16, 1929.

⁶¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Legation Peking to AA, No. 963 (IV Chi 757), March 19, 1929.

⁶²*Ibid.*, *Aide Mémoire*, March 20, 1929. The German Minister in China was instructed on March 22, 1929 once again to request the Chinese National Government to abstain from employing German military advisors. PA, RM, 37 Chi, II, Schubert to Legation Peiping, No. 36 (IV Chi 631), March 22, 1929.

press to Bauer's military mission in China. The fighting broke out as the result of the failure of the "demobilization conference" in February 1929 and the challenge to Chiang Kai-shek's authority posed by the powerful quadrumvirate of the Kwangsi militarists, Pai Ch'ung Tsi, Li Tsung-jen, Li Chi-shen (Bauer's old employer), and Huang Shao-hung.⁶³ At the end of March, Chiang Kai-shek launched a campaign against the rebellious generals and Bauer (as well as Wangenheim)⁶⁴ took part in the military operations.⁶⁵ Contemporary observers credited Bauer with the strategical and tactical innovations which contributed to a rapid conclusion of the campaign,⁶⁶ but a recent account more reasonably observes that the desertion of the Kwangsi group by their expected allies, the Kwangtung militarists and Feng Yü-hsiang, an over-extension of Kwangsi military strength and the unreliability of their forces in Peiping, and the confusion and indecisiveness of the Kwangsi generals in the field caused by the absence of the top leaders were responsible for the total

⁶³Clubb, 152-155. One of China's most pressing problems in 1928-1929 was the disbanding of some 2,250,000 troops, the majority of which did not stand under the direct control of Chiang Kai-shek. Various "demobilization" plans were considered, but it became obvious that Chiang Kai-shek's proposals involved disbanding the armies of his rivals and increasing his own strength. Bauer had advanced several schemes designed to centralize and tighten the structure of China's armed forces while at the same time reducing their numbers. See the discussion in Fox, "Max Bauer," 39-40; and BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, Nos. 41, 46, & 100. The discussion in Kreitner, 102-105, exaggerates Bauer's role in the events of the time.

⁶⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Erdsmanndorff (Peiping) to AA, No. 53 (IV Chi 710), April 2, 1929.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, Memo Trautmann (zu IV Chi 814), April 11, 1929.

⁶⁶See *ibid.*; and *The Times*, quoted in Fox, "Max Bauer," 42; and Kreitner, 112.

and quick collapse of the Kwangsi clique.⁶⁷

Bauer strongly supported the central government in its "punishment" of the "insubordinate" generals, and was contemptuous of the western press interpretation of the affair as a "civil war." He felt that his activities as well as those of Chiang Kai-shek were always regarded maliciously in those quarters, and hoped that the German government eventually would come to its senses and throw its full weight behind Nanking because "obviously many a struggle will occur here against insubordinate generals." Bauer also thought Berlin should issue energetic warnings to German export firms to stop the continued flow of weapons to military forces in China not directly controlled by Chiang Kai-shek,⁶⁸ thereby bypassing the centralized procurement system he had established. In these opinions can be seen not only Bauer's unreserved loyalty to his employer but his fundamental desire for China - the centralization and unification of the country under a strong regime.

Bauer returned from Hankow to Nanking on April 13,⁶⁹ and continued his work of modernizing the Nationalist army. But during the campaign against the Kwangsi faction he had contracted smallpox.⁷⁰ Taken for

⁶⁷Clubb, 153-55. A contemporaneous German consulate report from Hankow also attributed the defeat of the Kwangsi group to the unexpected desertion of the Hunan and some Kwangsi generals, and of Feng Yü-hsiang. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi; Militär*, II, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 1170 (IV Chi 988), *Anlage 1* (Consulate-General Hankow, No 31, April 8, 1929), April 16, 1929.

⁶⁸*BA, Nachlass Bauer*, No. 45, 147-50, Bauer to Waurick, April 16, 1929.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, No. 49, 120-24, Bauer to Legation Attaché Ing-wen Liang (Berlin), April 15, 1929.

⁷⁰A contemporary rumor had it that a political enemy had placed the infection upon a towel! Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 166.

treatment to the German hospital at Shanghai, he succumbed to the disease on May 6, 1929. His last rites were held a few days later in a German church in that city, with Major von Wangenheim delivering the oration on behalf of the advisory group and General Chiang Chün, confidant of President Chiang Kai-shek and Mayor of Shanghai, performing the same task for the Chinese government.⁷¹

Colonel Bauer, who had caused the Wilhelmstrasse so much concern during his lifetime, posed one final problem with his death. The German Foreign Ministry was obliged to wrestle with the question of whether or not to afford official recognition to his exploits and express official sympathy to his widow and son. On the one hand, it was recognized that Bauer had been instrumental in the visit of the Chen Yi Commission from which Berlin hoped extensive economic and technical cooperation would materialize. Further, if he had lived longer, Bauer undoubtedly would have added to Germany's reputation in China and thereby furthered her economic and trade involvement with the Chinese. On the other hand, he had pursued from "first to last" a military function in China, although he had repeatedly given assurances to the Wilhelmstrasse that he was engaged in civilian endeavors. He had been aware of Berlin's disapproval,

⁷¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 1632 (IV Chi 1214), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Shanghai, No. 618, May 11, 1929), May 22, 1929. Borcke, 320, reports that Madame Chiang Kai-shek laid a wreath of white roses on his coffin. However, her presence is not mentioned in the detailed report of Bracklo, the German diplomatic official in Shanghai. The following year a remembrance service for Bauer was ordered by Chiang Kai-shek who attended personally. BA, Nachlass Bauer, No. 70a, private letter Jakob Piegl to Fräulein Engeler, March 28, 1930.

and of the political complications which he had caused.⁷² Weighing all the factors, including possible foreign reaction, the German Foreign Ministry decided to remain officially silent on the matter, for any expression of condolences would be taken by the public as posthumous approval of Bauer's mission. It was decided, though, that German diplomatic representatives in China would have to participate in any memorial services in order not to offend the Nanking government and so as "not to deny the last honor to a German who had died under tragic circumstances."⁷³

Bauer's contributions to China's military development have been assessed authoritatively elsewhere.⁷⁴ Notwithstanding criticisms concerning the inapplicability of his military organizational reforms to the Chinese situation, it must be allowed that his contributions were substantial. He is justly credited with being the influence behind the Nationalist adoption of the German military system which brought almost all aspects of military command and operations into the hands of the Chief Executive, Chiang Kai-shek,⁷⁵ although, as we have seen, his task was certainly made easier by the long-standing Chinese admiration for German military arts. Chiang himself saw the advantages of the German

⁷²The latest embarrassment for Berlin was Bauer's participation in the Kwangsi punitive expedition. If the British Minister to Peiping should inquire, the German Minister was instructed to repeat Berlin's disapproval of his activities and say that no means were available to force Bauer to leave China. PA, *Bü St.S. Chi*, IV, State Secretary Schubert to Legation Peiping, No. 44 (zu IV Chi 710, 749, 757), April 14, 1929.

⁷³*Ibid.*, Memo Michelsen (IV Chi 1026), May 6, 1929.

⁷⁴Liu, 63-70.

⁷⁵*Ibid.*, 64. Liu is extremely critical of Bauer's innovations with regard to higher level military reorganization. For an opposite view, see Fox, "Max Bauer," 42-44.

system and willingly accepted Bauer's encouragement to reorganize the command and staff system in a manner that centered the maximum amount of control in his person.⁷⁶ Bauer also encouraged Chiang to establish a Central Military Academy at Nanking and to establish an extensive training system of Chinese officers in modern military practices in an atmosphere divorced as far as possible from politics. The model training battalion which Bauer initiated had far-reaching results and would be expanded and improved under his successors. In fact, some authors have gone so far as to credit Bauer with such details as the introduction of modern automatic weapons and the sending of Chinese officer cadets to Germany for study,⁷⁷ although it seems questionable whether in either case his persuasion was necessary or decisive.⁷⁸

Although most contemporaries centered their attention on Bauer's military activities, it would be a mistake to regard his role in China in such a restricted light. Bauer viewed the problem of Chinese reform as necessitating a total approach - political, economic, industrial, financial, and military. His output of memoranda in all these fields was

⁷⁶ Aside from the decade of future Sino-German cooperation in military matters, a more personal fact indicates Chiang Kai-shek's admiration for the German military - he sent his son Chiang Wei-kuo to study in Germany. See *PA, Abt. VIII, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, I, Memo (e.o. Pol. VIII 117), February 3, 1937. (This is a memorandum discussing Chiang Wei-kuo's angry departure from the household of Captain Freiherr von Stengel who was billeting him by order of the War Ministry. Chiang Wei-kuo was enraged by a speech emphasizing cordial German-Japanese relations made by Hitler in the *Reichstag*.)

⁷⁷ Liu, 40.

⁷⁸ It will be recalled that the Chinese had been requesting permission for officers to train in Germany since the early 1920's. See Chapter V, *supra*; and *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, I, *RWM* to AA, (*Heeres-Statistisches Abt.*) No. 103/9. 28 T. 3/I (IV Chi 1849), September 18, 1928 for the decision of the *Chef der Heeresleitung* to accept two Chinese officers for training at the Infantry School, Dresden.

prolific and impressive, and he made recommendations for reform in virtually every area of state life. It is true that under his successors the German advisory staff became almost entirely preoccupied with purely military affairs, but this was no fault of the Colonel's. Even if other Ministries in Nanking preferred to establish close relations with other countries, the advisory staff did contribute to the increase of German economic and trade relations with China. And if the military relations came to have predominance, Bauer certainly would have found small fault with this, for central to his whole concept of modernization was the view that a strong central state authority must exist in order to achieve internal peace and order. Therefore the task of creating a military capability which could enforce this authority must take precedence over all others, a point of view that closely paralleled that of Chiang Kai-shek.

From the standpoint of the German Foreign Ministry, and for many years to its dismay, the significance of Bauer's mission in China lay chiefly in the fact that he had initiated the organized participation of German nationals in China's military affairs, a beginning that would eventually lead to a close cooperation of the German and Chinese military. While the Wilhelmstrasse was eager to stimulate German trade with China, it doubted at the time whether the military advisory group contributed anything concrete toward this end, feeling that the ties would have developed in any event and that the trade in armaments in which it played a positive role was detrimental to Germany's image. Furthermore, until well into the 1930's, the Wilhelmstrasse was plagued by the constant attention which the advisory group in Nanking attracted from foreign newspapers and governments. Of

particular annoyance was the subsequent decision of the *Reichswehr* to cooperate with the military personnel, a cooperation which the Wilhelmstrasse was impotent to prevent. All that could be done was to work to minimize the public effects of each subsequent incident, and to attempt to dissuade other prominent military figures from going to China.⁷⁹

The Wilhelmstrasse's headache with the German military advisors in China did not end with Bauer's death. In fact, it was intensified as a result of the stature of the generals who followed him and of the enlarged scope of the enterprise once the *Reichswehr* took a more direct interest in the advisory group. Moreover, Bauer's successors often had the same radical right-wing political orientation that had made him so notorious. Bauer's immediate successor as head of the German military advisors at Nanking was Hermann Kriebel, a general staff officer whose political past was almost as notorious as was Bauer's. On June 18, 1929, the German Minister in Peiping, Borch, telegraphed hopefully to Berlin: "Is Bauer's successor, Major [*sic*] Kriebel, an Austrian citizen?"⁸⁰

⁷⁹In most cases, the Wilhelmstrasse's efforts were unsuccessful (Wetzell, Seeckt, etc.), but on one occasion it did persuade the ex-chief of the army command, General Wilhelm Heye, not to attend the marriage of his nephew, Lieutenant Lohmann, in Nanking because of the embarrassment another major German officer appearing in China would cause Berlin once the press got wind of the visit. *Ibid.*, IX, Memo Kühlborn (zu IV Chi 856), May 3, 1935.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, II, Borch to AA, No. 96 (IV Chi 1301), June 18, 1929.

CHAPTER VIII

SINO-GERMAN COOPERATION IN MILITARY MATTERS

AFTER BAUER, 1929-1930

Max Bauer's death, although removing a notorious and news-worthy figure from the scene, did not alter substantially the difficulties facing the Wilhelmstrasse with regard to its China-policy. Bauer had laid the groundwork well, and after his passing the plans and schemes initiated by him in the military sphere were continued by his successors. However, his driving force and eclectic approach to the modernization of China was not equalled by any of the subsequent chiefs of the advisory group, and, although the group steadily expanded in numbers, it increasingly took on a purely military complexion. As time passed, the *Reichswehr* authorities in Germany, long before the Foreign Ministry, dropped their coolness toward Sino-German military cooperation and adopted first an attitude of friendly support and then intimate connections with the advisors in China. The reason lay chiefly in the desire to support Germany's armament production capacity by encouraging export, and during the next decade (until the German advisors were ordered home summarily by Adolf Hitler) the support of the *Reichswehr* led to Germany gradually becoming China's major supplier of military equipment and armaments. German industrialists and entrepreneurs (for lack of a better word) also were not slow to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the ever-closer Sino-German military

cooperation after 1929.

Bauer's immediate successor in China, Lieutenant-Colonel Hermann Kriebel, was not an "Austrian citizen" but a Bavarian¹ of some notoriety. Like Bauer, Kriebel had close ties with right-wing extremist groups in Germany. As a matter of fact, Kriebel's career bears a striking resemblance to that of Max Bauer. Born in Germersheim in the Bavarian Palatinate in 1876, seven years after Bauer, Kriebel likewise chose a military career and in 1896 joined the Royal Bavarian Army as an officer cadet.² His early military career was unremarkable with the exception of his participation in the Boxer expedition at the turn of the century. He later was posted to the Bavarian General Staff. During the First World War he served as general staff officer in the field and was transferred in 1917 to the O.H.L.³

At the end of the war he was assigned to Germany's armistice Commission where he reputedly made the prophetic remark to the Allied Armistice Commission at the end of the negotiations: "See you again in

¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Michelsen to Legation Peiping, No. 72 (zu IV Chi 1301), June 19, 1929.

²No biographical study of Kriebel has been written. Aside from the sources cited below, references to his career and activities can be found in Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (rev. ed.; New York, 1962), 94ff.; Jacobsen, 27, 466; Bracher, *German Dictatorship*, 114-17; Weinberg, 341-43, and *passim*; Werner Maser, *Die Frühgeschichte der NSDAP: Hitlers Weg bis 1924* (Frankfurt, 1965), *passim*.

³In 1918, Kriebel served on the staff of the Quartermaster General II (i.e., supplies, etc.), acting as liason man with the Quartermaster General I (i.e., Ludendorff). See Albrecht von Thaer, *Generalstabdienst an der Front und in der O.H.L.*, Siegfried A. Kaehler, ed., (Göttingen, 1958), 191, 208. Kriebel's subsequent career supports the claim of Georg Franz-Willing, *Die Hitlerbewegung*, Vol. I, *Der Ursprung 1919-1922* (Hamburg, 1962), 42, that at this time he developed particularly good relations with Ludendorff. See *infra*.

twenty years."⁴ Like many other German officers, Kriebel was embittered by Germany's defeat and found solace in ultra-nationalistic and right-wing political activities. In 1920, he resigned from the army and returned to his native Bavaria where he threw himself into the organization of the local right-wing paramilitary forces, the "*Einwohnerwehr*." He has been described as the "driving, activist force behind the *Einwohnerwehr* movement."⁵

By 1923, Kriebel had attained some prominence in Bavarian right-wing extremist circles and served as military leader of the "*Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Kampfverbände*," an organization uniting Hitler's National Socialists with five other Bavarian *völkish* associations, as well as of the subsequent "*Kampfbund*," a paramilitary organization which included the SA but not the NSDAP.⁶ He played a major role in the "Hitler-Putsch" of 1923, marching in the front row of the column with Hitler. In the aftermath of the *Putsch*, he was arrested, charged with High Treason, and sentenced along with Hitler to five year's imprisonment. From this point on his association with the Nazis became increasingly intimate. He presumably fell totally under Hitler's spell while they shared the first floor of Landsberg prison. In fact, it has been asserted that Kriebel collaborated with Hitler and influenced him in the writing of *Mein Kampf*,⁷ but apparently this assertion is not correct.⁸

⁴Liu, 74-75.

⁵Karl Schwend, *Bayern Zwischen Monarchie und Diktatur* (München, 1954), 169, quoted in Franz-Willing, 42, n. 5.

⁶Gordon, *Hitlerputsch*, 91-92. Hitler served as "Political Leader" of the "*Kampfbund*."

⁷Heinrich Bennecke, *Die Reichswehr und der "Röhm-Putsch"* (München, 1964), 9, quoted in Werner Maser, *Hitler's Mein Kampf* (London, 1969), 59.

⁸Maser, *Mein Kampf*, 59.

Nonetheless, there is no doubt that from this point forward, Kriebel became a close associate of the *Führer*, joining the party early in 1924.

After a few months imprisonment, Kriebel was released and, like Bauer before him, made his way to Austria, where he was active in Carinthia as a military organizer with the *Heimwehr*. Later, in 1927, he became economic director of Freiherr von Helldorf's vast estates in that province. He maintained his association with right-wing circles and with General Ludendorff. He also resumed his friendship with Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.⁹

In the spring of 1929, following Max Bauer's death, Kriebel left for China to take over the leadership of the advisory group. The experience he had gained during the war in the *Oberste Heeresleitung* (and his acquaintance with Bauer from that period) as well as the fact that Ludendorff placed great confidence in him were factors contributing to Kriebel's appointment by the Chinese as Bauer's successor.¹⁰ As a matter of fact, in Bauer's last will and testament, Kriebel had been recommended as the most suitable candidate to continue with the task of

⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, AA to Legation Peiping, no No.(zu IV Chi 1301), June 21, 1929. Although I have not been able to establish the fact beyond doubt, it seems likely that during his stay in Austria he authored the respectable historical study, Hermann Kriebel, *Feldmarschall Fürst Windisch-Grätz* (Innsbruck, 1929). Cited in William L. Langer, *Political and Social Upheaval, 1832-1852* (New York, 1969), 369, n. 34.

¹⁰BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 62, Otfried Fuchs to Ernst Bauer, June 13, 1929. It is interesting that two decades later, the American journalist Karl von Wiegand claimed that he recommended to Chiang Kai-shek that he appoint General von Seeckt as Bauer's successor. See *ibid.*, No. 70a, Wiegand to Fröhlein Engeler, May 27, 1948. It will be recalled that a report had it that Wiegand had been the first to recommend Bauer to Chiang Kai-shek. See Alice Emily (Lady) Drummond-Hay, "Chinese Bauer," *Sphere*, June 29, 1929, cited by Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 161; and *supra*, 215, n.50

advising the Nationalist government.¹¹ However, the initiative had come from Kriebel himself. In the spring of 1928, he had written to Bauer "entreating" his old comrade to find him employment with the advisory group. He would soon have to give up his current position and his children were growing up.¹² Bauer apparently responded to this request for assistance, but the final decision of course rested with Chiang Kai-shek. Kriebel arrived in Nanking on June 13, 1929,¹³ and having been interviewed and winning the Chinese leader's approval, took over from Baron von Wangenheim who had been acting as interim commander of the advisory staff.¹⁴

Kriebel lacked Bauer's breadth of vision and organizational capabilities. From this point onward the advisory staff took on an increasingly military character and its influence in larger questions of the reorganization of China's industrial and economic development did not approach the potential as foreseen by Bauer.¹⁵ Kriebel, with his abrasive personality, did not evoke the same solid support from the

¹¹BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 62, Li Nai to Ernst Bauer, June 27, 1929; Bauer's last testament as dictated to Lieutenant Fuchs is reprinted in Lindemann, 127-28. The Colonel also made reference to returning his "assigned" mission to Ludendorff. ("*Da ich seit langem mit General Ludendorff verbunden bin, lege ich - durch den Tod gezwungen - meinen Auftrag in seine Hände zurück*") *Ibid.*

¹²BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 50, Ernst Bauer to his mother, December 28, 1933.

¹³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Reichswehrministerium to AA, No. 7.3.III (IV Chi 2994), Anlage 1 (letter from Kriebel to his brother Karl, a major in *Gruppenkommando I*, September 11, 1929), November 9, 1929.

¹⁴BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 62, Fuchs to Ernst Bauer, June 13, 1929.

¹⁵The narrowing of the German advisory group's activities cannot solely be ascribed to the death of Bauer and the incompetence of Kriebel. The civilian Ministries in Nanking were very America-oriented.

advisory staff as had his predecessor. As a matter of fact, his stubbornness, arrogance, and strong National Socialist views soon split the advisory group into two camps - those who felt strongly that he was the proper man to carry on Bauer's work and win Germany an advantage in China,¹⁶ and those who saw him as a divisive factor which ultimately would do damage to the standing of the advisory group with the Chinese.¹⁷ Bauer's son, Ernst, for example, complained that Kriebel's obtuseness would never permit him to adjust to the Chinese pattern of doing things. During Kriebel's tenure in China, he made a number of enemies and, according to Ernst Bauer, was "hated" by some of his Chinese associates.¹⁸

What chiefly concerned the Wilhelmstrasse however was Kriebel's National Socialist connection. In September 1929 to its alarm, Berlin learned from a confidant in the Chinese Legation that a large number of inquiries concerning employment with the advisory group had been received from people either members of the Nazi Party or having close contacts with National Socialist circles. Hermann Göring, then a Deputy in the *Reichstag* for the National Socialist Party, had asked the Chinese Legation to find positions specifically for "his people" with the Nanking government. Further, a certain Lieutenant-Colonel Witte had requested the Legation to forward a suggestion to Kriebel that he build up a National Socialist organization among the German advisors in China "that

¹⁶ *Ibid.*; see also *ibid.*, No. 49, Wangenheim to Waurick, August 8, 1929.

¹⁷ PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, *Heeresstatistische Abteilung* to Schoen (IV Chi 611) [excerpt of letter from un-named advisor], March 4, 1930.

¹⁸ BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 50, Ernst Bauer to his mother, December 28, 1933.

later could be transferred to Germany."¹⁹

The Wilhelmstrasse ascribed the growing Nazi interest in the advisory group to Kriebel's presence in China as its new head. Berlin also was well aware of the damage to Germany's world image if the nazification of the German military advisory group continued. From the standpoint of the Foreign Ministry the world press already paid excessive attention to the activities of the advisors, and a fascist coloration would only increase their newsworthiness and accentuate the suspicious and hostile slant of the reporting. For these reasons, Berlin warned the Peiping Legation of the Nazi interest and instructed it to pass on the information to the Nationalist government. Moreover, Nanking was to be told that such officers as Kriebel, Gudowius, and Lindemann were enemies of Germany's current constitutional form of government.²⁰ The Chinese Legation in Berlin also professed alarm at the Nazi penetration and promised the Wilhelmstrasse that Nanking would be warned against hiring any known National Socialists and specifically advised not to keep Kriebel.²¹

There was good reason for concern. In the advisory staff, a clique of National Socialists was taking shape. By October there were, besides Kriebel, five members of the Party in Nanking - Piegler, Fuchs, Hummel, Stölzner, and Neunzert.²² The latter, a lieutenant and

¹⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 2306), September 19, 1929.

²⁰*Ibid.*, Trautmann to Legation Peiping, no No. (IV Chi 3557), September 23, 1929.

²¹*Ibid.*, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 2306), September 19, 1929.

²²BA, Nachlass Bauer, No. 70, Fuchs to Fräulein Engeler, October 5, 1929.

"Old-Fighter,"²³ was on familiar terms with Heinrich Himmler (appointed to command of the *Schutzstaffeln* [SS] in 1929) and answered a personal request from him the following year for information on the ideological views of the members of the advisory staff.²⁴ He also sent his greetings

²³Max Neunzert was an early adherent of the Nazi cause. He played an interesting role in the 1923 *Putsch*. Following the fiasco in the *Bürgerbräu*, Neunzert was entrusted by Hitler with the task of obtaining the intervention of his (Neunzert's) friend, Prince Rupprecht, in the dispute in order to settle it peaceably. Neunzert's transportation difficulties (he was obligated to take the train to Rupprecht's castle at Berchtesgaden) prevented him from reaching the Prince in time, and the armed procession of November 9, 1923 was the result. Konrad Heiden, *Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power* (Boston, 1944), 194-95; Bullock, 110. See also Gordon, *Hitlerputsch*, 397, who does not repeat this story, but does confirm Neunzert's role as Hitler's liason with Rupprecht during the *Putsch*. It is also interesting that a quarrel between Neunzert and Röhm was a major reason for the latter's precipitate departure for Bolivia to join Kundt as a military advisor. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 303-04.

²⁴BA, NSDAP Hauptarchiv, XVI, *Deutschtum im Ausland*, Folder 666: China, M. Neunzert to Heinrich Himmler, September 17, 1930. The letter is initialled by Himmler. Neunzert's survey of the situation in the advisory staff has a paranoid air about it. The ideological split brought about by Kriebel and Neunzert's activities led the latter to complain that General Wetzell, Kriebel's replacement as head of the advisory staff in 1930 and whom Neunzert had not yet even met, was not only not supporting their endeavors to build a Nazi cell, but actually was intriguing against them with the Chinese. Neunzert was under the impression that Wetzell was a member of the Party, and urged Himmler to secure his dismissal. Kreitner, the Austrian police advisor, had left Chinese service and was on his way home to Graz with the intention of there joining the local Nazi organization. Neunzert urgently requested that this be prevented on the patently ludicrous grounds that Kreitner was an employee of British intelligence, and that his wife was in French service. Further, another police advisor, Major Wendt, who already had returned to Germany and was in the service of the Prussian police should be watched with great care because he was a friend of Kreitner's. Lieutenant Hummel, a party member, also was suspect to Neunzert - ostensibly he had been released from the *Reichswehr* because he was a "notorious liar" and had agitated against his superior officers. In China, he also was cooperating with the Chinese against the interests of his countrymen. Hellmuth Graf von Moltke, "nephew of the Field Marshal" (?), was another man who raised Neunzert's ire, but he had been let go by Nanking already because he was "good for nothing." Major von Wangenheim also was to be released. Lieutenant Streppel had once been a member of a Freemason lodge, as had his father, which made him suspect. All these "swine" were damaging the reputation of the German officers with the Chinese, working against their countrymen (meaning Neunzert and Kriebel) and had contributed to a diminishing of the advisory group's influence with the Nationalist

to his old comrades Frick, Strasser, and Hitler. Besides these Party members who are identifiable by the autumn of 1929, there is much circumstantial evidence that other Party members joined the advisory group in the next few months.²⁵ Further, Ernst Bauer, employed in Berlin in coordinating trade matters with the Chinese Legation, at some time during these years joined the party as well.²⁶

Like his predecessor, Kriebel found that not only was his task in China made more difficult by the firm opposition in the Foreign Ministry, but that the *Reichswehrministerium*, still officially cooperating with the Wilhelmstrasse in the latter's China policy, continued to refuse any support for the endeavors of the advisory group. The Colonel was very bitter about the lack of understanding with which German officialdom treated the "mission" of the advisors and, in a letter to his brother, echoed Max Bauer's contention that the military advisory group was accomplishing far more for German industry and Germany's image in China

government. For a more accurate and temperate view of the problems facing the advisory group with Nanking in 1929-1930, see *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, II, Borch to AA, No. 4071 (IV Chi 3557), November 28, 1929; and Lindemann, *passim*.

²⁵Without the Christian names of most of the advisors, it is impossible to track down further connections. For example, was Lt. Körner, member of the advisory group from 1929-1931 (Appendix H, *infra*) identical with Wilhelm Körner, World War I flier and friend of Hermann Göring (Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 298); or with Georg Körner, "vintage 1929 Nazi" and later Labor Front leader (Tauber, XVI/180, XVII/ 29)? At least one later Nazi is identifiable, though. Captain Walter Stennes joined the advisors in 1933 (presumably in fear of his life). Stennes had led an abortive SA revolt in 1931 (he was head of the SA for all Eastern Germany) but was expelled from the Party after the revolt was quelled. He then threw in his lot with Strasser's "Black Front." Konrad Heiden, *A History of National Socialism* (London, 1934), 127-28; Tauber, IV/111, VI/136-38, and *passim* for his post-World War II activities.

²⁶The formation of a National Socialist cell among the advisory group did stir some interest with the Chinese. In December 1932, a secret mission was dispatched to Germany by Chiang Kai-shek to study National Socialist ideology and organization. See *BA, Nachlass Bauer*,

than the entire German consular and diplomatic corps.²⁷ In the same vein, Kriebel (reacting to an article in the *Central China Post* of November 8, 1929)²⁸ wrote to Borch in Peiping, once again setting out the argument that the advisors were not fulfilling a purely military role but were engaged in a comprehensive program for China's reconstruction. He emphasized that they were employed by the legal and internationally recognized government of the Republic of China and objected to the attitude adopted by German officialdom. Particularly upsetting to him were the tendencious misrepresentations which appeared constantly in the "enemy" (western) press. For example, the assertion that there was dissatisfaction and disunity within the advisory group was not correct.

Borch's reply was extremely cool. He observed that so long as the Nationalist government had not totally mastered the internal strife, the activities of the advisors would continue to attract attention predominantly as a consequence of their military role. If, however, the advisory group should abstain from duties of a military nature, not only would the press attention abate, but logically greater support for the group could be expected from the German government. So long as the group continued to engage in military activities, the likelihood of political complications with the various factions in China's domestic politics

No. 62, Ernst Bauer to Hermann Göring, December 19, 1932.

²⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, II, RWM to AA, T. 3. III (IV Chi 2994), Anlage 1 (copy of letter from Kriebel to his brother Karl, Nanking, September 11, 1929), November 9, 1929.

²⁸*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 4032 (IV Chi 3443), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Hankow to Peiping Legation, No. 100, *Central China Post* [Hankow], "The German Officers," November 8, 1929), November 21, 1929. This article followed another entitled "German Officers" in the *North China Standard* (Peiping), October 30, 1929. See *ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 3899 (IV Chi 3305), November 7, 1929.

obliged Berlin to disavow the mission.²⁹

The German Minister had already warned Berlin that the renewed civil war in China had once again raised the spectre that Germany would be accused of taking sides in the struggle. The Treaty Powers were suspicious that the German advisors were German government agents (*Emissäre*), although he had been doing his best to allay the distrust. It did seem significant to Borch, however, that the new Japanese Minister to Peiping, K. Saburi, had brought up the subject of the relationship of the advisory group to the German government in their first conversation. Moreover, the indigenous Chinese press was publishing more and more reports about the presence of the advisors in the front lines, indicating that Germany's neutral stance toward the civil war was not fully believed.³⁰

The renewed civil strife in China was the result of the breakdown in the summer of 1929 of the uneasy alliance between Chiang Kai-shek and warlord Feng Yü-hsiang. During the winter, Feng was joined in his opposition to Chiang by another important warlord, Yen Hsi-shan, certain disgruntled militarists, and various dissatisfied right-wing and left-wing Kuomintang members, with the intention of putting together a new national government and overthrowing Chiang Kai-shek.³¹

The German Minister's fears were realized scarcely a month after he had expressed his apprehension to Kriebel that unpleasant complications

²⁹*Ibid.*, III, Borch to AA, No. 4313 (IV Chi 19), *Anlage* 1 (Kriebel to Borch, November 13, 1929), *Anlage* 2 (Borch to Kriebel, December 4, 1929), December 5, 1929.

³⁰*Ibid.*, II, Borch to AA, No. 4032 (IV Chi 3443), November 21, 1929.

³¹Clubb, 155-57; Gillin, *Yen Hsi-shan*, 110-17.

could arise as a result of German military advisors serving in Chiang Kai-shek's camp. On January 7, 1930, Wang Ching-wei,³² a left-wing Kuomintang figure of some prominence who recently had been expelled from the party and now was in opposition to Chiang Kai-shek, publicly charged the German government with complicity in the activities of the military advisors. Not only were the military advisors adversely affecting the friendly feelings of the Chinese people for Germany, but the fact that large quantities of arms and munitions, including tanks and trench mortars, continued to be exported by Germany to the Nationalist camp, seemingly laid bare the true policy of Germany toward Chiang Kai-shek's regime. These views were expressed in the *Koming Wan Pao*, the mouthpiece of Wang's Reorganization Party published in Shanghai.³³

The story was soon picked up in the international press. The London *Daily Telegraph* reported Wang Ching-wei's "Warning to Germany";³⁴ the *New York Times* noted that a serious anti-German campaign had been launched in Shanghai because of the continuing shipments of German arms from Hamburg and the presence "of fifty German military advisors selected by the German government and using diplomatic passports,"³⁵ information

³²See Howard L. Boorman, "Wang Ching-wei: China's Romantic Radical," *Political Science Quarterly*, LXXIX (1964), 504-25.

³³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Borch to AA, No. 9 (IV Chi 138), January 13, 1930; No. 570 (IV Chi 750), March 19, 1930. The "Koming Wan Pao" was apparently founded by General Hsü Chung-chih, a Nationalist general in Kwangtung, and formerly named "Chung Yang Wan Pao." See Borch to AA, No. 570 (IV Chi 750), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Shanghai, No. 29, February 10, 1930), March 19, 1930.

³⁴*Ibid.*, Trautmann to Legation Peiping, No. 6 (e.o. IV Chi 103), January 12, 1930.

³⁵*Ibid.*, Prittwitz (Washington) to AA, No. 15 (IV Chi 108), January 10, 1930.

that not only was inaccurate as to the particulars but also reflected the tendency abroad to link German officialdom with the presence of the military advisors.

The Wilhelmstrasse was quick to call a press conference to refute the accusations. A spokesman denied that the German government had recommended any military advisors to Nanking and once again stressed Germany's fundamental opposition to the participation of her nationals in foreign military undertakings. The protestation of non-complicity in China was correct, but the statement was only a half-truth with regard to Germany's policy regarding military advisors in other regions, as we have seen. As far as the arms shipments were concerned, the Foreign Ministry observed that these were now beyond the control of the German government. Further, if the material was of German manufacture, it must consist of war supplies which Germany under the terms of the Versailles Treaty had handed over to the Allies; obviously the construction of tanks and trench-mortars in Germany was forbidden unconditionally. If, however, the issue was that the material was transported on ships of German registry, here also the German government was powerless. Once the Nanking government had attained apparent control of the country, Berlin pointed out, the Treaty Powers themselves had terminated the Arms Embargo and therefore the German Government no longer had the right to forbid German ships from engaging in the arms traffic, particularly with a legitimate government.³⁶

The denial of complicity was distributed widely in the German press which recognized generally the accurateness of the government's

³⁶*Ibid.*, Note by Crull (IV Chi 103), January 10, 1930; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, January 11, 1930; Copy of dispatch of *New York Times* representative in Berlin to his paper, January 10, 1930.

non-involvement and what was considered to be the preposterous nature of the charges.³⁷ After all, all other considerations aside, Kriebel, like his predecessor, Bauer, was an enemy of the Republic.

But the issue was not allowed to die. In Shanghai, following news reports from Berlin of the German government's denial of the authenticity of the charges, Wang Ching-wei escalated his accusations. In a series of articles during the second week of January, the *Koming Wan Pao* attacked Germany's sense of international morality and humanity. Germany, which in its time had attacked and brutally violated France and Belgium, now was sending military specialists and internationally forbidden war material, such as poison gas, to assist the militarist Chiang Kai-shek in subduing the Chinese people. It was entirely understandable that Chiang Kai-shek would stoop to any level to consolidate his dictatorship, but it was less clear why the German government was willing to ignore its international commitments and to renounce the friendship of the Chinese people. The hope was expressed that Germany would recognize the seriousness of her actions before she was either called to account for her violations of the Versailles Treaty or a boycott movement was launched in China as a result of her unfriendly policy.³⁸

³⁷ See, e.g., *ibid.*, *Berliner Tageblatt*, "Unberechtigte Vorwürfe gegen Deutschland," January 10, 1930; *Germania*, "Die deutsche Offiziere Tschangkaischeks," January 10, 1930; *Tempo*, "Chinas falsche Vorwürfe gegen Deutschland," January 10, 1930; *Vossische Zeitung*, "Chinesische Beschwerden gegen Deutschland," January 10, 1930. Once again, the *Vossische Zeitung* found the charges to be "grotesque."

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 266 (IV Chi 419), *Anlagen* (Consulate-General Shanghai, No. 9, *Koming Wan Pao*, "Die Deutschen und Chiang Kai-shek: Beide stehen Ausserhalb der Menschheit" [January 9, 1930], January 11, 1930; No. 11, *Koming Wan Pao* [January 12, 1930] January 15, 1930 and, *Koming Wan Pao*, "In Ordnung bringen" [January 12, 1930], January 15, 1930), January 28, 1930.

This was no empty war of words, and the Wilhelmstrasse regarded the affair with much concern. Just such a boycott had proved very successful against British trade in the south of China during the 1925-1926 disturbances, and markets were lost which were never regained. The charges also were damaging to Germany's international reputation, resurrecting old suspicions about Germany's military proclivities, thereby hampering Berlin's efforts to secure further revisions of the Versailles Treaty. If the question of raising the subject of German military advisors in China in the League of Nations should be seriously considered by Paris, London, or Tokyo, this would also be damaging to the activities of German military advisors in Latin America, activities with which Berlin had no quarrel.³⁹ Complications with individual powers also might result, particularly with Japan, which the Wilhelmstrasse

³⁹In January 1930 Kriebel informed the German Consul-General in Shanghai that the Nanking government had evidence that Germany approved of the employment of German ex-officers in other countries, especially Latin America, and found it disturbing that this state of affairs existed while at the same time Berlin continued to protest the presence of German advisors in China. Berlin instructed Borch in Peiping to answer any Chinese *démarche* with the arguments that the two officers to whom the Chinese presumably were referring, Faupel and Kundt, had accepted respectively Peruvian and Bolivian citizenship. Surely Nanking would be able to see the fundamental difference between the activities of "individual ex-members of the German army [serving] in a stable country" and the China advisory staff's multifarious military functions which were taken by Nanking's rivals as evidence of Germany's partisanship. *Ibid.*, Schoen to Legation Peiping, no No. (zu IV Chi 419, Ang. II), March 22, 1930. The Wilhelmstrasse's former argument seems inadequate; after all, quite a few other officers besides Faupel and Kundt were serving in Latin America (see Borcke, *passim*). It is the second position which really represents Berlin's view on the matter - their presence apparently stirred no international or substantial domestic controversy. It appears that this is a topic that can bear investigation. A recent work on German policy toward Latin America in the 1930's, for example, Alton Frye, *Nazi Germany and the American Hemisphere, 1933-1941* (New Haven and London, 1967), devotes little attention (aside from mentioning the presence of various military missions) to this question.

suspected of supporting Wang Ching-wei and the *Koming Wan Pao*.⁴⁰

Paradoxically, at the same time that left-wing elements in China were criticizing the advisory group for its military activities, some elements in Germany were complaining that its role was not limited sufficiently to the military sphere. The *Zwölf Uhr Blatt* charged on January 13, 1930 that the officers were acting as agents for German industrialists and that a network of contacts was being formed between individual advisors and firms in Germany which by-passed the traditional China export firms. This development was "taking the bread out of the mouths" of the German business community in China. It was odd, the paper further observed, that the East Asia desk in the Foreign Ministry was actively supporting this process, particularly in view of the fact that the advisory group consisted largely of Hitler partisans.⁴¹ Over the next decade, this complaint that the German government encouraged development of new commercial avenues between Germany and China at the expense of the old China firms was heard with increasing frequency, emanating chiefly from the German Chambers of Commerce in China.

The charge had validity at this time in-so-far as the advisors were concerned.⁴² But not until later did certain German government

⁴⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Borch to AA, No. 17 (IV Chi 191), January 18, 1930.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, AA to Legation Peiping, No. 15 (zu IV Chi 143), Anlage 1 (*Zwölf Uhr Blatt*, "Die Nebengeschäfte der deutschen China-Offiziere," January 13, 1930), January 15, 1930.

⁴²Captain (later Major) Krummacher was engaged in forwarding a deal with Bofors for howitzers during this period; this placed him in competition with the Dutch Colonel de Fremery (employed in the Chinese Arsenal Office), who was acting for Skoda and Schneider-Creusot. See MA, W 02-44/1, 149-67, Krummacher (Nanking) to Colonel von Brauchitsch (Chef 6 Div., München), April 20, 1930. There also were numerous other Germans in China who presumably were in direct contact with the home firms in Germany, for example the air advisors. See *infra, passim*.

agencies, notably the *Reichswehr*, take a concrete interest in the advisory group, and it was especially after the Nazi takeover in 1933, and the appearance of various adventurers with official or party support,⁴³ that the role of the traditional firms was totally subverted. The real problem in 1930 for the export firms lay in the organization created by Colonel Bauer which was designed to centralize purchasing in Europe through the Chinese Trade Division, purchasing directly from the manufacturers and eliminating the middle-man role of the old China firms.

As far as the Wilhelmstrasse was concerned, it was not encouraging trade relations with China which were detrimental to the traditional export companies. On the same day as the accusation appeared in the *Zwölf Uhr Blatt*, the East Asia desk contacted Herr Waurick, agent for the advisory staff in Berlin, and inquired as to the accuracy of the assertions. Waurick confirmed that certain members of the advisory staff had contacted personal friends in German commercial or industrial circles with a view to securing positions as representatives in China, but that the Nationalist government as a result had issued strict instructions that henceforth advisors were not to discuss service or business matters with acquaintances but were to carry on all contacts with German commercial circles directly through the Trade Section of the Chinese Legation in Berlin,⁴⁴ a policy which of course reflected Max Bauer's intention when he recommended in 1928 the adoption of a centralized Chinese trade representation in Germany on the Soviet model.⁴⁵

⁴³See Weinberg, 120ff.; Drechsler, *passim*.

⁴⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Memo Altenburg (e.o. IV Chi 143), January 13, 1930; AA to Legation Peiping, No. 15 (zu IV Chi 143), January 15, 1930; Borch to AA, No. 525 (IV Chi 704), February 24, 1930.

⁴⁵See *supra*, 230-31.

The increasing number of reports from China, both from German diplomatic officials and in the press,⁴⁶ regarding the active participation of German advisors in the battle zones,⁴⁷ as well as the continued interest of Japan in the affair,⁴⁸ led the Foreign Ministry once again to instruct all major foreign service posts about the background of the German advisory group in China and the official policy of the German government. Berlin's impotence to force the withdrawal of the advisors was underlined and all representatives were instructed to emphasize this in conversation with their respective hosts.⁴⁹

Early in 1930, the Wilhelmstrasse learned through an informant that Nanking was planning to replace Kriebel as leader of the advisory group. He had proved to be a divisive element within the advisory group as well as offending a number of his Chinese hosts with tactless remarks

⁴⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Borch to AA, No. 4611 (IV Chi 252), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Canton, No. 656, December 14, 1929), December 30, 1929. For numerous other reports, see *ibid.*, *passim*.

⁴⁷The advisors *were* involved in the campaign against Yen Hsi-shan, Chiang Kai-shek insuring each of them for \$15,000. MA, W 02-44/1, 149-67, Krummacher to Brauchitsch, April 20, 1930.

⁴⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, AA to Embassy Tokyo, no No. (e.o. IV Chi 254), January 27, 1930; Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 233), January 23, 1930.

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, AA to all major Embassies, Legations, Consulates-General, and Consulates, no No. (IV Chi 297), February 12, 1930. Also of some concern for Berlin was the report spread by the news agency *Indopacifique* in January that Chiang Kai-shek had called for a German-Chinese Alliance. Actually, he had attended a lantern-slide display on New Years' Day put on by the advisory staff, at the end of which he had spoken a few words about the beneficial results to be obtained for both countries from German-Chinese cooperation. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, V, Schoen to Legation Peiping, No. 11 (e.o. IV Chi 278), January 28, 1930; Borch to AA, No. 22 (IV Chi 286), January 29, 1930.

and a boorish manner.⁵⁰ Further, the Chinese were not satisfied with his organizational or leadership capabilities. He had already been demoted from leadership of the group as a whole to chief of the general staff department and the training division, with General Lindemann replacing him at the War Ministry with responsibility for general training and educational efforts as well as armament questions, and Dr. Schubart taking over the newly formed civilian group.⁵¹ But even in this post, Kriebel was not acceptable to the Chinese and he had to go.

The man chosen to replace Kriebel, from the standpoint of the Wilhelmstrasse, once again was unfortunate, since he was another well-known figure of right-wing persuasion. A confidant of Chiang Kai-shek, Professor Chu Chia-hua (who had worked closely with Bauer and later was to be instrumental in bringing Hans von Seeckt to China),⁵² had approached Ludendorff and asked him to recommend a suitable successor.⁵³ Ludendorff's choice fell on *Generalmajor* Wilhelm (Georg) Wetzell, another old acquaintance from *O.H.L.*

⁵⁰ Cf. the remark of one of the advisors: "An eventual failure of the mission will remain indissolubly linked with the name 'Kriebel'." *MA, W 02-44/1*, 149-67, Krummacher to Brauchitsch, April 20, 1930.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* See also Lindemann, 134-35.

⁵² See Meier-Welcker, 64lff. Chu probably had been in touch with Ludendorff during his visit to Germany with the Chen Yi Commission. See *supra*, 219-24. There is also evidence that the Chinese were in contact with Seeckt during 1930. *MA, Nachlass Seeckt*, No. 77, letter of Captain Andreas Mayer-Mader, October 29, 1930; letter of Andreas Mayer-Mader, November 14, 1930. Mayer-Mader, who was employed by Nanking (see *MA, W 02-44/11*, letter of Major Mayer-Mader enclosing report of his son Andreas to *Stabschef der SA Röhms*, March 20, 1933), spoke of the pending arrival of his "employer" (*Auftraggeber*) from China, and arranged a meeting with Seeckt. In 1933, Captain Mayer-Mader was employed by Li Tsung-jen as an instructor at a non-commissioned officers school at Wuming, Kwangsi. *PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft, Wirtschaft 1: Allgemeines*, Consulate Canton to AA, no No. (IV Chi 1825), June 14, 1933.

⁵³ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Memo Schoen (e.o. IV Chi 489 - *Geheim!*), February 2, 1930.

Wetzell had a distinguished military career behind him.⁵⁴ He had joined the German army in Metz in 1889, and after spending a few years each in the artillery, engineer, ordinance, and infantry branches, was posted with the Great General Staff in 1904. Here he initially served directly under Ludendorff in the 2nd *Abteilung* - mobilization and deployment. Wetzell advanced steadily and seemed to show a marked talent for staff work. By 1913, he was Seeckt's subordinate in the general staff of the Third Army Corps. In the spring of 1915, he succeeded Seeckt as Chief of Staff of the Third Corps, and apparently was instrumental in the German victory over the Russians at Grodno in that year. In August 1916, Wetzell became head of the Operations Department of *O.H.L.*, a post which he held until the late summer of 1918.

During the Weimar period, Wetzell continued to hold important posts in the *Reichswehr*. In 1925, now a *Generalmajor*, he became Chief of the *Truppenamt*, the office which since 1919 carried on the functions of the forbidden Great General Staff. Of particular importance for this narrative was his involvement in the secret military cooperation with Russia, particularly the Lipetsk aerodrome and the Junkers enterprise.⁵⁵ Late in 1926,⁵⁶ though, Wetzell's "right-radical attitude"⁵⁷

⁵⁴The following biographical sketch of Wetzell is assembled from Borcke, 320-26; Liu, 75-76; Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 89ff.; Walter Goerlitz, *History of the German General Staff, 1657-1945*, trans. by Brian Battershaw (New York, 1953), *passim*; and Thaer, 88.

⁵⁵See Erickson, 255ff.; Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 275-76; Völkner, *Luftfahrt*, 141f.

⁵⁶Gordon, *Reichswehr*, 176.

⁵⁷*PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Memo Lautenschlager (e.o. IV Chi 491), February 22, 1930. This judgement appears in a biographical summary of Wetzell's career by Colonel Kuhlenthal of the *RWM (Stat. Abt.)*.

led to his removal from this post by Defense Minister Gessler, and at the end of 1927 he resigned from the army. He then founded a respected military journal, the *Deutsche Wehr*, which he continued to edit until its demise in 1930. Although Wetzell had the reputation of being a man of great energy, more of action than administration, he also was considered to be an especially gifted staff officer.⁵⁸

The employment of such a prominent general by Nanking, particularly at a time when the internal balance of forces in China had broken down and internal conflict once again threatened to become endemic, was bound to cause new headaches for the Foreign Ministry. The Japanese and French press already was paying excessive attention to the activities of the advisors, regarding with suspicion the attempts to reorganize the Nationalist armies. Once the news of Wetzell's appointment broke, an intensification of the press campaign, and particularly of the violent attitude of the French press, could be expected. The revision of the Versailles Treaty, German advisors in Latin America, relations with the western powers in the League, Article 179 of Versailles - all of these questions could once more come under public scrutiny, a matter of extreme concern for Berlin.⁵⁹

In an attempt to forestall such developments, the Wilhelmstrasse attempted to dissuade Wetzell from accepting the Chinese offer.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ See the assessment by General von Seeckt in *MA, Nachlass Seeckt*, "Ansprache an die Berater am 20. April 1934." Lindemann and the other advisors did not learn of Wetzell's coming until later, but he reports that he became aware of Chiang Kai-shek's dissatisfaction with the advisory group at a dinner on January 10, 1930. Lindemann, 124.

⁵⁹ *PA, Bll St. S. Chi*, IV, Memo Lautenschlager (zu IV Chi 513), March 5, 1930.

⁶⁰ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Memo Schoen (re conversation with Wetzell), n.d. [February 28, 1930].

Moreover, diplomatic steps were taken again with the Chinese with a view to persuading them to refrain from hiring German officers, especially those of a right-wing persuasion.⁶¹ They were specifically asked not to employ General Wetzell. Nanking proved to be as uncooperative in Wetzell's case as it had been in all previous requests not to employ German nationals as military advisors. The Wilhelmstrasse's request was rejected with the explanation that China, although taking cognizance of Berlin's position, as a sovereign country must protect and exercise its right to hire advisors of its own choosing,⁶² a reply entirely in character with the self-assertive nationalism of the "New China."⁶³

The attacks in China by the press organs of the Shansi coalition to the effect that the German government clandestinely supported the activities of the military advisors with Chiang Kai-shek continued intermittently throughout the early months of 1930. In Berlin, it was feared that the planned visit to China of an industrial study commission,⁶⁴ stemming from previous discussions with Sun Fo, might be misinterpreted if excessive attention was paid to the region under the control of Chiang Kai-shek's faction. For this reason, the commission's itinerary was evenly divided between the areas under the control of the Nationalists and those of their opponents and was publicly announced in

⁶¹PA, RM, 37 Chi, III, Schubert to Legation Peiping, No. 22 (IV Chi 498), February 25, 1930; Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Verbal Note [to Chinese Legation, Berlin] (zu IV Chi 498, Ang. II), February 28, 1930.

⁶²The concept of sovereignty was of course central to modern Chinese nationalism. On its early development, see Schrecker, 251-56.

⁶³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, AA to RWM, no No. [zu IV Chi 551], March 3, 1930.

⁶⁴See *infra* 355ff.

March 1930.⁶⁵

The same month also saw an intensification of the propaganda campaign conducted in the press of Shansi under the control of warlord Yen Hsi-shan, ally of Feng YÜ-hsiang in the coalition directed against Chiang Kai-shek. The political effectiveness of linking Chiang Kai-shek with foreign powers, in this case, Germany, had been demonstrated in the earlier charges of Wang Ching-wei concerning German complicity in the presence of the military advisory staff in Nanking. Now charges were aired that Germany was supplying Chiang with poison gas for use against the Shansi coalition and the dissidents within the Nationalist camp. The charges were persistent enough to evoke a protest to the German Consulate-General in Peiping from the local Chinese Chamber of Commerce. The German Legation at Peiping issued an official denial of the rumor, observing that Berlin had confirmed "that the manufacture of any kind of poisonous gas is strictly forbidden in Germany and any violations are persecuted [*sic*] with the utmost vigour of the law."⁶⁶

As far as can be ascertained, the charges about German delivery of poison gas at this time were pure fabrication. Nevertheless, they served the purpose of the Shansi group to portray Chiang Kai-shek's "ruthless drive to dictatorial power" as being abetted by foreign

⁶⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Borch to AA, No. 37 (IV Chi 538), February 28, 1930; Schoen to Legation Peiping, no No. (zu IV Chi 538), March 1, 1930.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 975 (IV Chi 932), Anlage 1 (Consulate-Shanghai to Legation Peiping, No. 53 [two enclosures], March 5, 1930), Anlage 2 (*Shanghai Evening Post*, March 5, 1930), Anlage 3 (*China Press*, "Chemical Warfare in China," March 5, 1930), Anlage 4 (Consulate-General Shanghai to editor of *Kiang Nan Wan Pao*, and editor of *Koming Jih Pao*, March 5, 1930), Anlage 5 (*North China Standard*, "Gas Yarn Exploded," March 5, 1930), March 27, 1930. The quote in the text is from the last-mentioned article.

interests. By April 1,⁶⁷ the breach between the two camps had hardened to the point where Yen Hsi-shan expelled Chiang's representatives from Peiping,⁶⁸ and declared himself commander-in-chief of all forces opposing Chiang Kai-shek. Efforts were also begun to create a new national government composed of all factions hostile to Chiang Kai-shek's control of the Kuomintang.⁶⁹

A declaration by Yen's new government on April 14, 1930 that all foreign military advisors serving with Chiang Kai-shek's forces would be promptly executed if captured⁷⁰ induced the Wilhelmstrasse once more to examine the legal measures available to compel the withdrawal of German nationals in China serving in military capacities. Various alternatives were considered, such as threatening termination of pension or loss of citizenship, or even whether major changes could be made in the existing military disciplinary code to cover officers not on active service, but none were considered to be without objection or adequate for the purpose. The first option, that of cancellation of pension on the grounds that the individual had established a residence abroad, applied only to officers subject to the revised Military Pension Act (*Wehrmachtversorgungsgesetz*) of January 1, 1921. The bulk of the German officers employed in China, with the notable exception

⁶⁷ Chiang Kai-shek had planned to launch a major offensive on this date, but the unpreparedness of the troops being trained by the advisors set it back and led to his dissatisfaction with the work of the advisory staff. Lindemann, 124

⁶⁸ Tying Lindemann down in Peiping. *Ibid.*, 152-53.

⁶⁹ Gillin, *Yen Hsi-shan*, 113.

⁷⁰ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, W.T.B., April 14, 1930; Embassy Paris to AA, No. A. 1433 (IV Chi 979), *Anlage 1 (La République, "La guerre civile en Chine: Les Allemands et les belligérants,"* April 16, 1930), April 16, 1930.

of General Wetzell, were not covered by this law, but by the provisions set out in the Officers' Pension Law of May 31, 1906, which made no mention of place of residence. The second option, that of threatening loss of nationality on the grounds that the individual concerned had ignored an order from the German government to disengage from the military service of a foreign state, was legally feasible, but was considered politically objectionable because of the domestic controversy which undoubtedly would ensue. Moreover, as a result of the development in international law regarding citizenship, deprivation of nationality could no longer be considered an appropriate means of coercion. Finally, a change of the provisions in the existing military disciplinary law (*Disziplinarstrafrecht*) was also judged to be politically objectionable. If Germany should alter the law to make punishable the entry of retired officers into foreign service, then the Allies on the basis of Article 179 of Versailles could henceforth demand that the German government apply it in all individual cases. This would make the provision "without the permission of the government" for all practical purposes null, for the Allies could claim that under the terms of Article 179 such permission could not be granted in the first place. Hence, although the measure seemed applicable and advisable in the extreme case of China, in the long run and in general the repercussions could be very uncomfortable for Germany.⁷¹ Although this question was examined from a legal perspective, undoubtedly another

⁷¹The problem was considered by *Abteilung IV - China* and *Abteilung II F - Militär*. See *ibid.*, Memo (IV Chi 970), April 16, 1930; Minute Michelsen (zu IV Chi 970), April 17, 1930; Minute [*Abteilung II F*] (zu IV Chi 970), April 24, 1930.

reason why Berlin did not simply order the advisors to leave China (as Hitler later did) lay in the desire to continue good relations with Nanking, and increase Sino-German trade.

Once again Berlin had concluded that circumstances required it to accept an uncomfortable and damaging situation with regard to the military advisory group. One is tempted to ascribe the Wilhelmstrasse's inaction to its hope that economic benefits for Germany would ensue if the advisory group could be dissuaded from reliance upon German armament purchases in return for the industrial plans and trade schemes then being considered in private German circles. However, it is difficult to balance this assumption with the mass of evidence underlying the extreme concern with which the problem was regarded by the professional staff of the Wilhelmstrasse. It is perhaps more correct to view the continued rationalizations for inaction in this Ministry to a well-developed reliance upon legalities, and perhaps the knowledge that firm measures would not be approved by other agencies of the German government. Not only was the Ministry of Transportation actively supporting penetration of the China market by the German aircraft industry (for which the presence of the advisors would be advantageous), but another arm of the German state, the *Reichswehr*, at some time during these months decided to place the advisory group under its wings for the benefit of Germany's armament industry. The Wilhelmstrasse had decided it had to live with the embarrassment the advisory group caused Germany, and work to minimize the damage which the presence of the group in China caused to Germany's overall foreign policy. It probably did not foresee the scale to which the cooperation was destined to grow in the immediately succeeding years.

CHAPTER IX

THE BEGINNINGS OF ACTIVE *REICHSWEHR* INTEREST IN THE GERMAN MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP, 1930-1931

As viewed by the Wilhelmstrasse, the major obstacle to ending the continued growth of the military advisory group in China and the concurrent increase in German involvement in the armaments traffic was the attitude of the Nanking government. Repeatedly, Berlin had tried to dissuade Nanking from employing Germans in military capacities, but the Chinese had proved intransigent. The Wilhelmstrasse consistently had stopped short of taking drastic measures, rationalizing that firm steps were not within its powers. It seems likely however that stronger measures were not taken primarily because of Berlin's desire to expand German trade and industrial contacts with the Chinese. In this situation, then, the Wilhelmstrasse saw no alternative for the present but to bear with the added burden the presence of German military advisors placed upon its policy of maintaining a "low profile" in China.

The problem became more acute after 1930: not only did the presence of the German military advisors continue to attract the attention of the press and foreign governments, but the increased armament traffic between Europe and China stirred the interest of another branch of the

German government in the advisory staff - the *Reichswehrministerium*. Contacts between German official military circles and the China advisors were strengthened, leading to ever closer Sino-German military cooperation during the following eight years.

In the spring of 1930, the renewed civil conflict between Chiang Kai-shek and his opponents once more found the Wilhelmstrasse in the middle. The issue of the Germans serving with Chiang again became a matter of public discussion, as did the old problem of German firms supplying one camp or the other with weapons. Now, however, Berlin had no legal measures comparable to those put into effect to meet the earlier difficulties of 1927-1928 - the prohibition of July 27, 1927 regarding the manufacture of certain armaments in Germany remained valid, it is true, but the law of March 31, 1928 regarding transit of war material through Germany or its transport on German vessels had expired in May 1929.¹ The bulk of the armament shipments for the present still originated from other countries, but this was small consolation to the Wilhelmstrasse in meeting the renewed public outcry in China over the German "arming" of the opposing forces in China's civil struggle.

Thus, just as during the events leading to the success of the Nationalists, Berlin was faced with the problem of adverse publicity about armaments flowing through German hands to China, only now the problem had increased in scope. The decision of the Nanking government, inspired by Bauer, to establish a coordinating agency for arms purchases in Berlin, and the activities of the military advisors produced the

¹See Chapter IV, *supra*.

result that German firms once more had the lion's share of the business. Not only Nanking but dissident regimes relied heavily upon Germany for their armaments, a fact which raised much ire in the central government. Nanking had prepared itself for the renewal of civil war by requiring that all war matériel imports to China be covered by a certificate issued by the Nationalist government. Any shipments not possessing such a license were liable to confiscation by Nationalist authorities and the persons involved to criminal prosecution.² Despite this attempt to monopolize the supply of foreign weapons, Nanking's opponents continued to make substantial purchases in Europe, traffic in which German vessels were deeply engaged.

The bulk of the weapons exported to China, as had been the case earlier, was not of German manufacture but came from Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Scandinavia. Nevertheless, the armaments were carried to China on vessels flying the German flag and trans-shipped in German harbors. And because of the peculiar record-keeping methods of the Chinese Maritime Customs as previously explained, all such shipments were regarded as originating in Germany.³ The attitude of the Wilhelmstrasse toward the trade had not altered in the slightest over the previous two years. German firms, steamship companies, and import-export associations had been repeatedly warned against participating in

²PA, *Abteilung IV Wirtschaft, Rohstoffe und Waren: Waffen*, XIV, Chinese Legation Berlin to AA, Verbal Note (IV Chi 1013), April 23, 1930. See also PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Memo (zu IV Chi 817), March 23, 1930.

³PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Memo (IV Chi 1032), April 25, 1930. The Wilhelmstrasse already had made representations to Nanking to change the method of customs compilations.

the weapons business,⁴ and, as a matter of fact, the German government even released a public warning through Wolff's Telegraph Bureau. Further, discussions were held among the representatives of various government ministries involved as well as with representatives of the free port of Hamburg with a view to perhaps resurrecting the expired laws regarding the participation of German nationals in the China weapons-trade. However, the consensus was that economic considerations for the present outweighed the political difficulties being faced from the Northern Coalition.⁵

Charges and protests continued to emanate from Yen Hsi-shan's camp,⁶ until on May 31, 1930 his government issued an official communiqué calling on all signatories of the Treaty of Versailles to enforce the provisions regarding German export of war matériel and military advisors. The communiqué charged that the renewal of civil war in China was partly attributable to the German advisors in Chiang Kai-shek's service:

⁴PA, *Abteilung IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XIV, AA to OAV and Verband Deutscher Reeder, no No. (e.o. IV Chi 944), April 19, 1930.

⁵PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, III, Memo (IV Chi 1032), April 25, 1930. Representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs, Transportation, Defense, and Finance and of the City of Hamburg met on April 8, 1930 to discuss weapons delivery to China. A record of the meeting can be found in PA, *Handelpolitisches Abteilung, Handakten Clodius: China*, II, Minutes (IV Chi 909), April 9, 1930. See also, for the Nanking government's concern with weapons traffic from Germany to its enemies, *ibid.*, Memo Schoen (e.o. IV Chi 817), March 27, 1930.

⁶A direct approach was made by Yen Hsi-shan in April 1930 to German Legation officials in Peking. See PA, *RM, 37 Chi*, III, Kühlborn to AA, No. 48, April 18, 1930.

We have received an authoritative report from Shanghai by important members of the Nanking government that all were at the beginning adverse to the present war, but that it was owing to the German advisers' assurances and insistence that Chiang Kai-shek made his decision in favour of war, hoping to accomplish his ambitious programme with their assistance.⁷

The threat concerning the immediate execution of all foreign advisors captured while serving with the forces of Chiang Kai-shek was repeated.

The prospect of German nationals and officers being executed by a Chinese warlord was not one which the Foreign Ministry could view with equanimity. The inevitable result at home would be a storm of protest at the inability of the government to protect the lives of German nationals abroad. With this in mind, the Wilhelmstrasse worked to forestall a possible incident. Kriebel was warned by the German Minister in Peiping of the possible consequences faced by advisors serving with the front-line troops. Germany, of course, no longer possessed rights of extraterritoriality and nothing could be accomplished legally on their behalf by Berlin. Yen Hsi-shan's government also was approached and cautioned that any executions would be a blatant violation of international law.⁸

The Foreign Ministry's warnings to Kriebel were of no avail. To its alarm, Berlin discovered early in June that some eleven German

⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, *Daily Telegraph*, "German Advisers in Chinese Army," May 31, 1930. For further press reactions, see, e.g., *ibid.*, *Germania*, "Alte Verleumdungen," May 31, 1930; *Vossische Zeitung*, "Oberst Bauers Stab," May 31, 1930; *Der Tag*, "Deutschfeindliche Aktion in China," June 1, 1930; *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, "Verleumdungen," June 1, 1930; *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, "Deutschland und China," May 31, 1930; *L'Echo de Paris*, "La reprise de la guerre civil en Chine est le fait des officiers instructeurs allemands," June 1, 1930; *Leipzig Neueste Nachrichten*, "Chinesische Klage über Deutschland," June 1, 1930; *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung*, "Deutschen-Hetze in China," June 1, 1930.

⁸PA, RM, 37 Chi, III, Borch to AA, No. 58 (IV Chi 952), May 9, 1930.

military advisors, including Colonel Kriebel and General Wetzell, were active on the Lunghai front.⁹ Two advisors, Lehmann and Moellenhoff, were piloting civilian aircraft belonging to the Nanking government on reconnaissance missions over enemy lines.¹⁰ The arrival of General Wetzell in China early in May had not been noted by the press as yet,¹¹ but once news of his participation in the campaign became known, a further series of protests could be expected from the camp of the Northern Coalition.

Also of great concern to Berlin were the charges that Germany was involved in the shipment of poison-gas stocks to Nanking. The charges initially had appeared quite preposterous, but by April information from other sources compelled the Wilhelmstrasse to consider them seriously. It learned of an alleged purchase order placed by Nanking through the Trade Division of the Chinese Legation in Berlin for 1000 poison-gas bombs. Inquiries were made through the Ministry of Interior as to the possibility of a German firm obtaining surplus gas-bombs or manufacturing them. According to this Ministry, neither of these alternatives were possible - no facilities for the manufacture

⁹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, Borch to AA, No. 72 (IV Chi 1307), June 3, 1930. A later report increased the number of advisors at the front to fourteen. See *ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 1843 (IV Chi 1518), *Anlage* [list of German officers serving in the field], June 16, 1930.

¹⁰*Ibid.* See also *Anlage*, a declaration of Lehmann and Moellenhoff to the German Consul at Tsinanfu in which they attribute the agitation to French influence. An extensive description of the German military advisors in the campaign can be found in a letter of Lehmann to a certain Herr Hashagen which was turned over to the Foreign Ministry by Dr. Mohr of the OAV. See *ibid.*, Note Lautenschlager (e.o. IV Chi 1581), *Anlage* (O. Lehmann, Tsinanfu, to Hashagen, June 14, 1930), July 10, 1930.

¹¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, Borch to AA, No. 1579 (IV Chi 1392), May 21, 1930.

of poison-gas existed in Germany, and what remained of World War I stocks was buried underground and closely guarded. Nevertheless, the Interior Ministry suspected that a Berlin firm, Steffen & Heymann, was involved in the business. The firm had participated in the weapons trade with many countries, including with Ibn Saud in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, negotiations with a well-known adventurer who has previously figured in this narrative, Gustav Amann,¹² acting for Nanking had resulted in the firm being engaged to construct a plant in China, a plant which the Interior authorities suspected was for the production of war-gases.

This information led the Foreign Ministry (and the Ministry of Economics) to warn Herr Steffen several times not to engage in any arms business with China.¹³ Just as repeatedly, Steffen maintained that his firm had no such intention. Ostensibly the project with which it was concerned in China was the construction of a central airport for Nanking, and was of personal interest to Nationalist Finance Minister T.V. Soong.¹⁴ In this assertion, Steffen was correct - though he omitted to mention that the project involved a *military* airport and training school as part of the over-all scheme. And notwithstanding all his denials about armaments and gas sales, by the end of 1930 the Wilhelmstrasse had learned from various sources, including the police authorities in Berlin, that Steffen (who went to China late in the spring of 1930 to conduct personally the negotiations) was not only constructing for the Nanking

¹²See Chapter II, 67, n. 43; and Chapter V, 186, n. 40, *supra*.

¹³PA, *Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XIV, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 937), April 12, 1930.

¹⁴For more on this project, see *infra*, 350-52.

government a factory which would manufacture mustard-gas, but was in possession of large stocks of phosgene gas which the firm had been attempting to dispose of for a number of years - facts that harbored great potential difficulty for the Foreign Ministry.¹⁵

Although this involvement of Steffen & Heymann in the poison-gas trade was not at this time public knowledge, there were other reports of German involvement in the selling of this weapon to China that were brought vividly to the attention of the public. For example, in April 1930 a shipment of armaments for the Nanking government was confiscated in Indochina by French authorities. The government of Marshal Yen Hsi-shan protested to the League of Nations about the character of the shipment, charging that it included 200 cases of explosive-bullets and large quantities of poison-gas. Although Yen did not specifically charge the German government with complicity in this venture, he implied its involvement by questioning the morality of a government which would permit its nationals to engage in supplying the Nationalists with war materials forbidden by international convention.¹⁶ Moreover, a German newspaper provoked a brief flurry of agitation in Germany on the part of leftist Chinese students by asserting that the vessel had acquired its cargo in Germany. The left Kuomintang-controlled Union of Chinese Students

¹⁵PA, *Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XIV, AA to RWiM (zu IV Chi 937), April 22, 1930; RWiM to AA (IV Chi 1143), May 12, 1930; *Reichsminister des Innern* to AA (report of Police President, Berlin, *Abt. I.A.*, May 30, 1930), June 25, 1930; *ibid.*, XV, AA to Legation Peiping, no No. (IV Chi 1444), June 26, 1930; Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 148 (IV Chi 1868), July 31, 1930; Memo Altenburg (e.o. IV Chi 2434), November 18, 1930; Memo Altenburg (e.o. IV Chi 2646), December 20, 1930.

¹⁶For copies of Yen Hsi-shan's letters to the League of Nations, see *ibid.*, Consulate-General Geneva (IV Chi 1238), May 24, 1930; Nolda (German representative at League) to Weizsäcker, May 23, 1930.

sent letters to various papers charging that the German government was in league with the "military dictatorship" of Chiang Kai-shek and had conspired to supply him with poison-gas.¹⁷

As it turned out, no gas was involved in the shipment,¹⁸ nor had it originated from German sources. After a personal rebuke from a member of the Foreign Ministry to a representative of the Union of Chinese Students, the association agreed to issue a public retraction of the charges,¹⁹ but German public opinion once more had been engaged by the problem, and the spotlight remained fixed upon the activities of the German military advisors in China and the flow of arms to Chiang Kai-shek.

The embarrassment resulting from the flow of armaments to both camps in the Chinese civil war caused Berlin, having rejected internal legislation, once more to consider in May and June of 1930 the possibility of getting the May 1919 Arms Embargo reactivated. It, of course, had been permitted to lapse after the success of the Nationalists, after the "establishment of a government in effective control" of China. The Wilhelmstrasse sounded out London on its attitude, and Sir Robert Vansittart, Permanent Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office, agreed that the situation once again called for a concerted international effort to stem the flow of armaments to China.²⁰ But his was an isolated

¹⁷*Ibid.*, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 1272), May 31, 1930; *Magdeburgische Zeitung*, May 20, 1930; *Frankfurter Zeitung*, May 22, 1930; Memo Michelsen, June 2, 1930.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, Consulate Hanoi to AA, No. 2 (IV Chi 1258), May 27, 1930.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, Memo Michelsen, June 2, 1930.

²⁰*Ibid.*, XIV, Schoen to Embassy London, no No. (e.o. IV Chi 1037), April 30, 1930; Sthamer (London) to AA, no No. (IV Chi 1156), May 12, 1930.

opinion. In Peiping, Borch discussed the question with the representatives of the Treaty Powers and found little sympathy for the proposal. The consensus of opinion was that the establishment of trade and customs agreements with the Nationalists since 1928, effectively recognizing them as the legal government of China, excluded a renewal of the Arms Embargo. Nanking, as the internationally recognized authority in China, undoubtedly would react in a hostile fashion if such a flagrant breach of its sovereignty were committed. In any event, belief in the Diplomatic Corps in the efficacy of such international agreements had been blunted by the obvious inadequacy of the 1919 Arms Embargo while it was in effect - it had not proved to be of any value in limiting China's civil strife.²¹

The Treaty Powers²² nevertheless were not faced with the dimensions of Germany's problem. Germany, without extraterritorial rights and subject to Chinese legal jurisdiction, had to reckon with the possibility of reprisals, harassment, or legal steps as a result of the participation of German nationals in the arms traffic. Boycotts were a standing threat. Such measures could occur in the territory of either faction. For example, the Nationalists in May issued public instructions to the naval forces under the command of its nominal ally in the north, Marshal Chang Hsüeh-liang, to seize all vessels which

²¹*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 1565 (IV Chi 1380), May 27, 1930.

²²During these months, Britain and France lost confidence in the Nanking government's ability to master the internal situation. Of major importance for subsequent Sino-American relations was the disillusionment of the American Minister, Nelson T. Johnson, who had done much to bring about a Chinese-American *rapprochement*. One reason for the hands-off policy at this time was the desire to see whether Chiang Kai-shek's government had mastered the centrifugal forces plaguing China. See Iriye, 268-75.

were not in possession of a Nanking license.²³ The same month, the Nationalist Ministry of Finance publicly threatened reprisals against German firms suspected of being involved in an arms shipment on the *R.C. Rickmers*, a ship of German registry, destined for the Northern Coalition.²⁴ For its part, the Northern Coalition, as has been shown, was highly agitated by the weapons purchases carried on through the Chinese Legation in Berlin by the Chiang Kai-shek regime,²⁵ and by the presence of German military advisors serving with the troops of the Nationalist leader.

The propaganda campaign of the Northern Coalition linking Chiang Kai-shek with German "reactionism" continued through the summer of 1930. On July 2, Marshal Yen's government again exhorted the Treaty Power representatives in Peiping to press their respective governments to enforce Articles 170, 171, and 179 of the Versailles Treaty.²⁶ The continuing presence of German military advisors in

²³PA, *Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XIV, Borch to AA, No. 68 (IV Chi 1166), May 16, 1930.

²⁴See *infra*. The *R.C. Rickmers* was also involved in a much greater incident the following year.

²⁵Chinese Customs Statistics released at the time showed that weapons imported from Germany for military purposes through the port of Shanghai alone increased almost five-fold from 1928 to 1929 (from 147, 791 to 670,624 Haikuan Taels) while total imports of military arms only increased two-and-one-half-fold (732,048 to 1,914,140 Hk. Tls). PA, *Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XIV, Borch to AA, no No. (IV Chi 1556), *Anlage 1* (Consulate-General Shanghai, No. 126, June 11, 1930), June 21, 1930.

²⁶*Ibid.*, XV, Borch to AA, no No. (IV Chi 1530), July 2, 1930. The text of the declaration can be found in the *Central China Post* of July 9, 1930. See PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, IV, Borch to AA, No. 2379 (IV Chi 1794), *Anlage 1* (Consulate Hankow, No. 71, *The Central China Post*, "German Advisers," July 9, 1930), July 22, 1930. At least one government took the charges seriously. United States Secretary of State Stimson instructed the American Minister to China,

Chiang's camp as well as the persistent reports of the arrival of German arms shipments destined for Nanking was proof sufficient that the German government actively was supporting the Nationalist cause. Berlin was sufficiently concerned to issue for a second time a comprehensive press release denying Germany's complicity:

The export of arms for purposes of warfare, ammunition, and poison gas from Germany has been prohibited by statute, and such prohibition is strictly enforced. The German military advisors of the Chinese army are employed against the wishes of the German Government. The German Government disapproves of their employment, has repeatedly warned the officers, and has seen to it that the Chinese Government [Nanking] could not possibly doubt that the employment of German citizens for military purposes is deemed undesirable by the German Government.²⁷

The same month General Wetzell's presence in China became public,²⁸ but the press reactions in that country did not approach the magnitude which the Foreign Ministry had feared. The Northern Government limited its comment to an expression of wonder that the German government had taken no steps to prevent the further hiring of German ex-officers by Nanking in view of its protestations of innocence. The conclusion was drawn that a secret agreement providing for German military support had been a prerequisite for Nanking's

Nelson T. Johnson, to participate in any discussions held by the Diplomatic Body on possible measures. The United States government regarded itself entitled to enforce Articles 170, 171, and 179 of Versailles under the terms of the German-American Treaty restoring friendly relations signed August 25, 1921. See *FRUS* 1930, II, 18, U.S. Legation Peiping to Secretary of State, No. 549, July 7, 1930; *ibid.*, 19, Stimson to Legation Peiping, No. 230, July 10, 1930.

²⁷PA, *Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XV, *Berliner Tageblatt*, July 6, 1930. A partial English translation can be found in Bloch, 14.

²⁸The news leaked in Berlin on July 13, 1930. See PA, *Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, IV, *The Times* (London), "Chinese National Army," July 14, 1930.

conclusion of the Sino-German Treaty of 1928.²⁹

The constant repetition of the charges by members of the Northern camp began to have its desired effect. Following yet another public protest early in September on the part of Feng Yü-hsiang, Yen's ally in the struggle against Chiang Kai-shek, to the effect that the German government was permitting Nanking openly to purchase weapons and recruit advisors in Germany, the German Minister in Peiping reported to Berlin that his repeated explanations in these regards were greeted both in Chinese and Treaty Power circles with scarcely concealed disbelief. Particularly dubious, even to the Americans, seemed his assertion that the German government was unable to terminate the pensions

²⁹*Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 95 (IV Chi 1636), July 17, 1930. The public pronouncements of neither side in the Chinese civil war corresponded with their private actions. Simultaneous with the attacks on Germany emanating from Yen Hsi-shan's Northern Coalition, he was negotiating with Junkers for the purchase of aircraft for military purposes. The situation came to the attention of the Wilhelmstrasse when Junkers applied for a German government export-credit guarantee which both the Ministry of Economics and the Ministry of Transportation wished to grant. Protests by the Foreign Ministry that Yen was a "rebel" led to a scheme by the other Ministries whereby Junkers would sell the planes to a Swedish corporation, thus being eligible for the export-credit, which in turn would sell them to Yen. The Wilhelmstrasse protested vigorously against this device as well, observing that not only was the delivery of war material in violation of its long-held policy, but that complications undoubtedly would arise with Nanking if German complicity should become known, a likelihood since it was dubious if secrecy in the transaction could be maintained. Notwithstanding the Foreign Ministry's objections, the airplanes were shipped from Hamburg in November without the necessary license of the Chinese Legation. (See *infra* for further significance of this incident.) See PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien, IV, Memo Schoen (e.o. IV Chi 1833), August 14, 1930. (See *marginalia* State Secretary Schubert: "Eine Lieferung an die Nordarmee wäre politisch höchst unerwünscht."); PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen, XV, AA to Junkers-Werke (e.o. IV Chi 2409), November 13, 1930. In the other camp, while Chiang Kai-shek was busy purchasing German weapons and enlarging his German advisory staff, he was just as busy protesting the ostensibly unneutral attitude of Japan because of the supposed presence of Japanese military advisors with Yen Hsi-shan's army. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, Borch to AA, No. 2667 (IV Chi 1982), August 23, 1930.

of ex-soldiers serving with foreign governments.³⁰

The German government to its relief was temporarily relieved of the pressure early in the autumn of 1930. In September-October 1930, the military forces of the Northern Coalition suffered a series of costly defeats. Decisive was the entry of Marshal Chang Hsüeh-liang on the side of Chiang Kai-shek with the result that the forces of Feng Yü-hsiang were "routed," while Yen Hsi-shan withdrew with the remnants of his army into his home province of Shansi and threw himself on the mercy of the "Young Marshal."³¹ Over 100,000 men had died in the struggle which one reporter called "one of the bloodiest and most costly civil wars in the history of the Chinese Republic."³²

The role which the German military advisors played in Chiang Kai-shek's "victory" is worth considering in some detail. The belief developed in some circles in Germany, particularly within the *Reichswehr*, that Nanking's victory over its opponents was due to the tactical skill and strategic advice of the German military advisors.³³ This belief encouraged those elements which hoped that the advisory group would be

³⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, Borch to AA, No. 2987 (IV Chi 2166), September 19, 1930.

³¹The German Minister in Peiping reported that a political agreement had been worked out between Yen Hsi-shan and Chang Hsüeh-liang, the enmity between them being so slight that they permitted themselves to be photographed "hand in hand" in Peiping at the end of hostilities. *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 121 (IV Chi 314), January 14, 1931.

³²Quoted in Gillin, *Yen Hsi-shan*, 115. See also Clubb, 156-57; Iriye, 268-70.

³³PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, Michelsen to Mohr (OAV) (zu IV Chi 314), March 7, 1931; Mohr to Michelsen (IV Chi 503), March 12, 1931. Mohr reported a conversation between *Geheimrat* Penk of the *Verband für den Fernen Osten* and General Haefke (*sic?* - Haefen?) of the *Reichsarchivamt* during which the latter asserted that Nanking's triumph was attributable to the "superior tactics and strategy of the German military advisors."

of political or economic advantage to Germany, believing as they did that a corresponding rise in the influence of the advisors in the Nationalist camp would naturally follow the "victory." The role of General Wetzell in the direction of the campaign also was unduly magnified.³⁴ The Wilhelmstrasse went to great pains to dispell these illusions, at least in government circles, ordering Borch to provide a detailed analysis of the causes of the defeat of the Northern Coalition which was subsequently widely circulated.³⁵

Borch's report is of some interest, setting out as it does the continuing opposition of the German Minister in Peiping to the activities of the military advisors, a view shared by the Foreign Ministry in the face of changed opinion in other government agencies.³⁶ The victory of Nanking, Borch reported, was illúsiory - more correctly the situation had to be interpreted as a shifting of the internal balance of forces in China. The Northern Coalition had been disrupted by the timely entry into the civil war on the side of its opponents of the strategically located warlord forces of Chang Hsüeh-liang and the

³⁴This view has been accepted by some authors. Borcke, 322, for example, attributed Feng Yü-hsiang's defeat in Honan to a "Cannae operation" master-minded by Wetzell, and Yen Hsi-shan's escape north of the Yellow River to the ignoring of Wetzell's strategic plans. As a matter of fact, the influence of the German military staff in the conduct of operations was limited. Chiang Kai-shek did not believe they had mastered either the terrain or psychology of China, and generally excluded them from the strategic planning. Further, he was annoyed at their failure (in his eyes) to fulfill his mobilization demands for an earlier launching of the campaign. See Liu, 76; and Lindemann, 123-24.

³⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, Borch to AA, No. 121 (IV Chi 314), January 24, 1931; AA to RWM (zu IV Chi 314), March 4, 1931; AA to Consulate-General Singapore [and other consular and diplomatic posts], n.d. [February 1931].

³⁶See *infra*.

consequent desertion of many former adherents as the balance swung in favor of the Nationalists. For example, four generals of the Kuominchün (Feng Yü-hsiang's army) with their troops deserted to the Nanking camp during the battle of Loyang. One could not speak of a "rout" of the army of Feng Yü-hsiang, or of the destruction of the power of Yen Hsi-shan. With the exception of the virtually barren province of Shensi, Nanking had not been able to expand its political control to the north. Shansi remained in Marshal Yen's hands, although his power had been weakened and he was now a junior partner to Chang Hsüeh-liang. (Shansi remained occupied by Yen's army and subject to his administration [and thus tax-collecting powers]; neighboring Hopei replaced Yen's bureaucracy with that of Chang Hsüeh-liang, not of Chiang Kai-shek.) Therefore real "victory" in 1930 belonged not to Chiang Kai-shek's Nanking regime, but to the Manchuria warlord, Chang Hsüeh-liang. And it was obvious that Nanking looked with as much disfavor on his possession of Tientsin and Peiping as it had on the control of the north by the Northern Coalition.

Contrary to the widespread view in Germany and the international press that Chiang Kai-shek had consolidated his position by triumphing over his opponents, Borch argued that it was important to recognize the dangers inherent in exaggerating the strength and stability of the Nanking regime. Any erroneous estimation of Chiang's true power position in China and the continued existence of strong opposition could lead to a misconstrual of the status of the German advisory staff. Far from being advantageous to Germany, its presence constituted a continual threat. For one thing, it was directly subordinate to Chiang Kai-shek whose future was not as yet free from serious challenges whether from

other warlords or from within his own party. Even if one ignored the suspicion with which the Germans were viewed by all factions in opposition to Chiang Kai-shek, Borch continued, it had to be emphasized that even with the Marshal their influence was minimal. He had restricted their activities to purely military problems and excluded them entirely from political questions. Even in the economic sphere, with the exception of armament sales, it was doubtful whether their presence was of value to Germany. Chiang Kai-shek concerned himself entirely with military problems and internal political matters, and displayed not the slightest interest in practical economic measures. Such affairs were entirely in the hands of responsible ministries where little love was felt for the German military advisors. It was widely felt in Nanking governing circles that they contributed to the tendency in the President's office to allocate the scarce financial resources of the government to large-scale military planning at the expense of economic reconstruction. And in these ministries many non-German advisors (particularly Americans) were employed who encouraged the anti-German and anti-militaristic biases.

Finally, Borch concluded, the German military advisors in China were of the "old school" - narrowly competent in the military sphere, but grossly ignorant of larger questions of policy or economics. (Bauer had been an exception.) Even in the former sphere their advice was largely ignored, and particularly in the educated circles which made up the power structure in the Nanking government (including those educated in the United States), the continuing presence of the old Confucian contempt for military practitioners was unmistakable. No honor would

accrue to the German military advisors for their contributions, no advantages would be derived by Germany.³⁷

This pessimistic analysis of the potential influence of the military advisors was whole-heartedly seconded by the East Asia desk of the Foreign Ministry. Fully aware that nothing approaching domestic political stability had yet come to China, and in view of the continuing suspicion of the Treaty Powers, the Wilhelmstrasse continued to oppose the military role performed by the German advisors. However, another (if somewhat independent) arm of the German government had altered its viewpoint toward the advisory group, and henceforth gave its support to the military advisory group and the Nanking government - the *Reichswehr*.

The Foreign Ministry first received wind of the changed policy of the military early in the winter of 1930-1931. In November Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer of the *Reichswehrministerium*³⁸ discussed the advisory group in China with members of the Wilhelmstrasse's East Asia desk. He proposed that a distinction should be made between the advisors serving in China and those German ex-officers employed in Latin America or

³⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: *Militär*, IV, Borch to AA, No. 121 (IV Chi 314), January 24, 1931. For a diametrically opposite view emphasizing the influence of the advisors, see the report of an unknown military advisor which was circulated in the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* and the *Reichswehr*. *Ibid.*, Mohr (OAV) to Michelsen (IV Chi 2520), *Anlagen* ("Der Bürgerkrieg in China im Jahre 1930," and "Erfahrungen"), November 29, 1930; AA to Legation Peiping (zu IV Chi 2520), December 8, 1930.

³⁸There is little doubt that this officer is identical with the Fischer who was responsible in the Defense Ministry (at the same time Wetzell was chief of the *Truppenamt*) for the secret military contacts with Russia. See Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 275-77; Gatzke, *Stresemann and the Rearmament of Germany*, 86-87; Erickson, 247-82, *passim*.

other regions.³⁹ He pointed out that inevitably the China advisors established contact with old comrades in the *Reichswehr*, requesting such innocuous material as training and organizational pamphlets. Was there a means whereby such material could be sent to the advisory staff without fear of being publicly compromised?

The East Asia desk was firm in expressing its opposition to the establishment of any contact between the German government and the advisory staff. The German military advisors in China, it was argued, clearly played roles fundamentally different from their counterparts in other foreign lands. For one thing, they were directly involved in the domestic turmoil in China, and had participated in military operations.⁴⁰ Fisher was warned that any direct *Reichswehr* contact with the military advisors was to be avoided: it invariably would become public knowledge as no discretion could be expected from the Chinese side.⁴¹

The Wilhelmstrasse's opposition grew out of its conviction that the military advisors in China caused only international embarrassment for Germany. It also rejected the view widely held in the Bendlerstrasse (and later repeated by Colonel Fischer) that a stability had come to China with Chiang Kai-shek's "victory" over the Northern Coalition. Further, the opinion that Chiang Kai-shek had triumphed over his opponents

³⁹ Although both the Wilhelmstrasse and the *Reichswehr* officially disavowed the activities of the German military advisors in Latin America, it seems clear that both agencies tacitly approved of their presence in that region. See *supra*, 275, n. 39.

⁴⁰ The bombing of the Chinese city of Chengchou by German aviation advisors was used as an example.

⁴¹ *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, IV, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 2417), November 15, 1930.

mainly because of the assistance of the German military advisors⁴² was totally false - the end of the war was attributable to the intervention of Chang Hsüeh-liang.

Despite the warning from the Wilhelmstrasse the *Reichswehr* went ahead with its plans to establish direct communications with the advisory staff. Until late in 1930, General Wetzell had maintained indirect contact with the Bendlerstrasse through Lieutenant-Colonel (ret.) Brinkmann, an employee in Berlin of the Arado aircraft firm.⁴³ In January 1931 Colonel Fischer informed the Wilhelmstrasse that he had established direct ties with Wetzell in order to coordinate inquiries about deliveries of supplies or the hiring of officers in Germany for the China mission. The Trade Division of the Chinese Legation in Berlin was supposedly in complete agreement with the new system.⁴⁴

The motives for the radical change in the attitude of the

⁴²A certain degree of chauvinism is evident in the reports stemming from German sources in the Nationalist camp and circulating in Berlin, e.g., that "the German advisors had triumphed over the Soviet Russian" advisors of Feng Yü-hsiang (Feng had broken with the Soviet Union in 1927) and the allegedly "French" military advisors of Yen Hsi-shan. (Yen actually employed many foreigners, including German technicians, in his Taiyuan arsenal. See Gillin, *Yen Hsi-shan*, 28.)

⁴³*PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, V, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 160), January 26, 1931. (Conversation with Lt. Colonel Fischer.)* This information is confirmed by other evidence scattered throughout the documentary material. (The name is sometimes spelled "Brinckmann" in the documents.)

⁴⁴*Ibid.* There is some ambiguity in this matter. Although the Chinese had pressed for direct relations in the matter of hirings, they objected to the *Reichswehr* selecting the officers. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, V, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 223), February 3, 1931.* The fact that most of the subsequent advisors in China were on the retired list is of little consequence for determining their relationship with the *Reichswehr*; such a device had been used to camouflage the participation of German officers in similar schemes in Russia.

Reichswehr were varied.⁴⁵ There seems little doubt that the apparent victory of Chiang Kai-shek in the 1930 civil war contributed to the belief that the status and influence of the advisory staff consequently would be elevated. Of more importance, undoubtedly, was the large increase in armaments purchasing in 1930 through the Trade Division in Berlin,⁴⁶ purchasing that was accelerated as a result of the civil war and which was coveted by German industry. During this period contacts had been established between the Nationalists and a number of German firms. It seems that the *Reichswehr* seized this opportunity to exploit the growing market for the benefit of Germany's armament industries. One of the major problems with the rearmament activities during the Weimar period was that, owing to their illegality, the Bendlerstrasse could never guarantee to the firms involved a sufficiently steady market to make increased production financially profitable.⁴⁷ This was particularly true in the area of aviation development, and underlay

⁴⁵On the basis of available evidence it is impossible to establish exactly when the decision was taken to support the advisory group. For example, as late as November 1930 the *Reichswehr* refused to accept twelve further Chinese officers for training in its schools. However, the *Reichswehr* also said that the training of officers of all foreign countries was becoming too much of a burden to accept more. See *ibid.*, IV, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 2452), November 21, 1930; and T-120/5620/L1525/L460359, "Wochenbericht des Referats IV China," November 30-December 6, 1930. There is reason to suspect that Wetzell's very appointment was supported by certain elements in the *Reichswehr*, notably the office responsible for aircraft production. Krummacher, Seeckt's later adjutant, was in direct contact with Lt. Colonel Keitel of the *Truppenamt* early in 1930. See MA, W 02-44/1, 149-67, Krummacher to Brauchitsch, April 20, 1930.

⁴⁶It will be recalled that General Chiang Tso-pin, a confidant of Chiang Kai-shek, had taken over the Berlin Legation, reporting directly to the Nanking military authorities and actively pursuing Nanking's armament purchases in Europe completely independent of the Chinese Foreign Ministry (which disapproved). See PA, Abt. IV *Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XV, Borch to AA, No. 2659 (IV Chi 2026), August 26, 1930.

⁴⁷See Carroll, 69-71, for a summary of the economic policy of rearmament.

the efforts of the *Reichswehr* to assist in the development of civilian aviation.⁴⁸ It is not without significance that German government agencies and independent firms currently were engaged in an aggressive campaign to penetrate the Chinese aviation market.⁴⁹

According to information available to the Wilhelmstrasse, Wetzell by February 1931 was maintaining direct communications with the Army Statistical Office as well as indirectly with the *Reichswehr* through Brinkmann. Apparently the Statistical Office⁵⁰ hoped that the advisory group in China would develop along the lines so successfully worked out in cooperation between the *Reichswehr* and the Soviet Union during the 1920's.⁵¹ Plans had been drawn up to secure an increase in the size of General Wetzell's staff by some eight officers. They were to be selected as to their suitability by the *Reichswehr*, and only after their selection would the Chinese Legation be informed of their availability, a scheme that apparently met with the disapproval of the Chinese.⁵²

⁴⁸For the cooperation between the *Reichswehr* and the *Reichsverkehrsministerium* during this period, see Völker, *Luftfahrt*, 142ff; and Chapter X, *infra*. Although the surnames of some of the advisors correspond with those on the secret list of *Reichswehr* flying officers of November 1, 1930 (*ibid.*, 255-59), without Christian names and further information it has proven futile to establish a direct connection. However, two later China advisors, *Generalleutnant* Alfred Streccius and *Generalleutnant* Karlewski previously had had (and in the case of the latter, returned to) *Reichswehr* aviation positions. See also Karl-Heinz Völker, *Die Deutsche Luftwaffe 1933-1939* (Stuttgart, 1967), 247, and *passim*.

⁴⁹See Chapter X, *infra*.

⁵⁰The *Statistische Abteilung* acted as the concealed intelligence branch of the *Reichswehr*. For its activities in the clandestine Soviet-German military collaboration, see Erickson, 262ff.

⁵¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, V, Memo Trautmann (IV Chi 223), February 3, 1931.

⁵²*Ibid.*

On the basis of available evidence one can only wonder whether the intent of the *Reichswehr* went further than simply increasing armament sales to China. It seems doubtful that any plans were developed to establish training facilities in China on the scale of those in the Soviet Union - the secrecy element for one thing was completely absent in the case of the former country. Perhaps it was hoped that officers could serve with the advisory staff in order to gain practical experience in the field - at least, in the case of the recent civil strife, the reports of the air advisors involved in combat must have been interesting to the *Reichswehr*. But, taking into consideration all of the factors involved, one must conclude that the underlying motive in "adopting" the China advisory group was to direct the bulk of arms orders by the Nationalists to Germany.

The Wilhelmstrasse was highly disturbed by the decision of the *Reichswehr* to pursue an independent policy toward China. An extensive analysis of the problems posed by the presence of German military advisors in China was drawn up by the East Asia desk in agreement with *Abteilung II (Militär)*. All of the familiar arguments were once again marshalled in defense of the policy advocated by the Wilhelmstrasse, and it was observed that it was a long-standing policy of the German government to disavow the military advisors. Arguments regarding possible complications arising with foreign powers or with the autonomous Chinese warlords, difficulties because of the relevant provisions of the Versailles Treaty, possible friction with Nanking - all were cited to convince the *Reichswehr* to reconsider its decision to establish direct relations with General Wetzell and the German

advisory staff.⁵³ But to no avail - henceforth the German military advisory group in China was no longer an orphan in German government circles and from this point can be dated the extensive and close cooperation in military matters between Nanking and Germany during the 1930's.

No information has come to light that this policy disagreement between the *Reichswehr* and the Wilhelmstrasse was brought to the attention of Chancellor Brüning or President Hindenburg, and it seems questionable in any event whether the issue was of sufficient importance to reach such a level. After all, the *Reichswehr* had long been pursuing policies at the expense of other government offices whenever it felt its interests required such a course. Likewise, it seems that no discussions ensued between Ministers Groener and Curtius.⁵⁴ However, this lack of coordination is not strange. The incident simply provides more evidence (if more is needed) of the willingness and ability of the German army to take policy decisions which properly should have fallen under the jurisdiction of civilian government agencies. Indeed, in this case, as with the Soviet-German secret military cooperation or

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Memo Michelsen (zu IV Chi 160), January 28, 1931. Although this memorandum was prepared with the aim of sending it to the *Reichswehrministerium*, a higher official in the Wilhelmstrasse (*Ministerialdirektor* Köpke) decided it would be awkward to make a formal reply to what had been a "personal" initiative by Colonel Fischer. Instead, informal discussions were held with the *RWM* to elaborate the Foreign Ministry's objections. See *ibid.*, Note Köpke (zu IV Chi 160, ang. 1), n.d. [February, 1931].

⁵⁴ In any event, relations between the two at this time presumably were not good, with General Schleicher intriguing against Curtius and in favor of Groener. See Carsten, *Reichswehr and Politics*, 331. There is no mention of German policy toward China in Julius Curtius, *Sechs Jahre Minister der deutschen Republik* (Heidelberg, 1948), except for a brief mention, 108, of German "mediation" in the Russian-Chinese dispute in 1929 over the Chinese Eastern Railway. See *supra*, 95, n. 122.

with regard to secret rearmament,⁵⁵ the Wilhelmstrasse could only trail in the wake of *Reichswehr* policy and attempt to minimize complications. The dual China policy (and after the advent of the Nazis the multiple policies)⁵⁶ henceforth pursued by Germany led to a steady diminution of Foreign Ministry influence in the shaping of German policy toward China.

During 1931 the hands-off policy advocated by the Foreign Ministry was fully vindicated. In May 1931, Kwangtung and Kwangsi in south China once more combined forces against Nanking and a new separatist government took shape in Canton under the leadership of dissident Kuomintang figures - notably Wang Ching-wei and Sun Fo. By August, Berlin was again caught in the middle between two Chinese governments over the issue of German armaments. A German vessel carrying a large consignment of weapons destined for the Canton regime came to the attention of Nanking. The shipment, consisting of three Junkers aircraft from Sweden and large amounts of armaments of Czechoslovak origin,⁵⁷ was being transported on the German freighter

⁵⁵ It was only in April 1929 that the Cabinet (including Stresemann) made an attempt to bring secret rearmament under civilian control and thereby perhaps limit it by giving official approval to the *Reichswehr*'s policy. See Wolfgang Sauer, "Die Mobilmachung der Gewalt," in Bracher, Sauer, and Schulz, *Machtergreifung*, 775-76. The situation in Nanking was not much different: the Chiang Kai-shek-dominated Ministry of War ignored the Waichiao Pu in armament questions, and T.V. Soong's Finance Ministry intrigued with Sun Fo's Ministry of Railroads. See Chapter X, *infra*.

⁵⁶ The activities of the numerous offices are discussed in Weinberg, 120-32. Of interest is the comment in the margin of air advisor Streccius's report of May 13, 1935 by State Secretary von Bülow wondering whether the Air Ministry was now also making China policy! See *ibid.*, 126, n. 25; and for the report, *PA; Abt. II Luft: Luftverkehr, Ostasien*, VI, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 497 (IV Chi 1059), *Anlage* (Air-political situation to May 1935 by Streccius, May 13, 1935), May 16, 1935.

⁵⁷ A complete manifest can be found in *PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XVI, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 1815), September 1, 1931.

R. C. Rickmers. Siemssen & Co., the German firm that has appeared before in this narrative, was the agent for the aircraft consignment, and another German firm, Schenker & Co., Hamburg, transacted the weapons business. Upon receiving word through its agents of the vessel's cargo, Nanking ordered the ship to proceed from Manila to a harbor under its control and off-load the weapons, forcing compliance by threats against Rickmers' properties in China.⁵⁸ The firm was unable to solicit support (or even sympathy) from the Wilhelmstrasse⁵⁹ and delivered the goods to Woosung.

The confiscation by Nanking called forth a storm of anger in Canton. It was assumed by the Cantonese authorities that the German government had forced compliance on the Rickmers Line and thereby intervened in China's domestic politics in favor of the Nanking government. A heated press campaign was begun in the papers controlled by the southerners, resulting on August 24 in the proclamation of a boycott against German goods in the territory under their jurisdiction.⁶⁰ As might be expected, the European press also gave full coverage to the incident, referring to the "German-Chinese Conflict."⁶¹ Even German

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, Memo Lautenschlager (e.o. IV Chi 1693), August 13, 1931; Bülow to Legation Peiping, No. 45, August 17, 1931.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, Rickmers Reederei A. G. to AA (IV Chi 1725), August 17, 1931; AA to Rickmers (zu IV Chi 1725), August 18, 1931; AA to Consulate-General Canton, No. 8, August 18, 1931.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, Wagner (Canton) to AA, No. 8, August 16, 1931; Legation Peiping to AA, No. 2480 (IV Chi 2211), September 19, 1931. The Rickmers firm, in order to exculpate itself, had released a telegram in China which stated that "after consultation with the German government" it had found it necessary to comply with Nanking's demand.

⁶¹For a sampling of German and English editorial attitudes and reports see *ibid.*, e.g., *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, August 25, 1921; Legation Peiping to AA, No. 57 (IV Chi 1789), August 25, 1931.

business circles became involved. The *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* dispatched a telegram to the Canton Foreign Minister, Sun Fo, protesting the non-involvement of the German business community in the weapons-trade (!) and requesting that the boycott be lifted.⁶²

Difficulties with both the Nanking and Canton governments continued to mount. The boycott in Canton had caught the Hamburg-America Steamship Line with four vessels en route to China carrying armaments destined for both governments. In order to avoid intensification of the situation, the HAPAG directors resolved on re-routing the shipments before the Nanking government learned of the consignments for Canton. The first vessel, the *Voigtland*, carried 239 cases of rifles and 667 cases of cartridges destined for Canton, and over 1000 cases of cartridges destined for Nanking. The first consignment was off-loaded at Sabang in Sumatra, and the *Voigtland* proceeded to Shanghai with the cargo for Nanking.

Word had reached the Nanking government (through agents in Europe) however about the arms destined for the Canton regime on the *Voigtland*. Reprisals against the Hamburg-America Line were threatened by Chiang Kai-shek if the arms were not delivered to Nanking instead of Canton. HAPAG thereupon directed all of its vessels to proceed directly to Shanghai rather than delivering arms at Hong Kong for the Canton regime.⁶³

⁶²*Ibid.*, *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* to AA (IV Chi 1800), August 26, 1931. Sun Fo replied by telegram demanding that the *Reichsverband* influence the German government to suspend arms shipments to Chiang Kai-shek and withdraw the military advisors. See *ibid.*, *Reichsverband* to AA (IV Chi 1816), August 28, 1931.

⁶³*Ibid.*, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 1923), September 10, 1931; Memo (e.o. IV Chi 1867), September 4, 1931; AA to Embassy, The Hague

The decision of HAPAG to bow before the pressure exerted by the Nanking government evoked a howl of protest from the Canton dissidents. The next vessel carrying arms for Canton, the *Duisburg*, with 400 automatic weapons, 1000 other small-arms, and a million rounds of ammunition, had already docked at Hong Kong however and was unable to proceed to Woosung-Shanghai. The Canton authorities threatened to seize the ship by armed force once it left British waters,⁶⁴ but ultimately settled for impounding the ship by Court Order.⁶⁵ The next two vessels, the *Havelland* and the *Sauerland*, had landed their Canton-destined armaments at Colombo and, upon arriving at Hong Kong were impounded under the same court order. Subsequent negotiations between the representatives of HAPAG and the Canton regime resulted in an agreement that the armaments in Colombo would be delivered on yet another vessel of the German line and the weapons on the *Duisburg* turned over to Canton. The impounding was then lifted.⁶⁶

The ships proceeded to Woosung where, a few days after arrival, they were seized along with two other HAPAG ships by the Nanking

(e.o. IV Chi 1935), September 12, 1931; Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 155, October 9, 1931. The Nanking government, upon discovering that some armaments originally destined for Canton had been off-loaded in Dutch Sumatra, demanded that the Netherlands authorities turn the weapons over to it. See *ibid.*, Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 146, *Anlage* 2 (T.V. Soong to Manager, HAPAG, Shanghai), September 16, 1931.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, XVII, Consulate Hong Kong to AA, No. 546 (IV Chi 2336), September 18, 1931; T-120/5620/L1525/L4640457, "Wochenbericht der Abt. IV OA," September 13-19, 1931. The agent in Hong Kong for the Canton regime (who repeatedly threatened to solve the issue by force) was the colorful Canadian adventurer, "General" Morris "Two-gun" Cohen.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, Consulate Hong Kong to AA, No. 561 (IV Chi 2592), October 3, 1931; and No. 562 (IV Chi 2593), October 6, 1931.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, Consulate Hong Kong to AA, No. 569 (IV Chi 2677), October 12, 1931.

authorities on the excuse that all armament shipments originally destined for Canton had been purchased with "government money" and must be turned over to the central government.⁶⁷ Following further negotiations, this time between HAPAG and Nanking, the ships were finally released.

During all this confusion, the Wilhelmstrasse did not remain unconcerned. Here was further proof of the correctness of its position toward German involvement in the arms trade with China - and confirmation that Chiang Kai-shek had not been able to consolidate his position within the Nationalist camp or extend his authority throughout China as a result of the "victorious" end of the Northern Coalition War. During these weeks, the Foreign Ministry again considered placing a comprehensive legal prohibition on arms sales by German nationals to China, and worked on the Nanking authorities to convince them to terminate the activities of the Trade Division of the Chinese Legation in Berlin and the issue of certificates for weapons transports from Germany.⁶⁸ These efforts remained futile.

However, in the event, Germany was rescued from possible escalation on these incidents by the Japanese thrust into Manchuria on September 18, 1931. For a time, the interparty and interregional squabbles of China were set aside in response to the much larger threat

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, German Legation liason at Nanking to AA, No. 1065 (IV Chi 2849), October 23, 1921. Oskar Trautmann of the East Asia desk replaced Borch as Minister to China on October 13, 1931. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: Vertretungen in China*, VI, Trautmann to AA, No. 2899, October 13, 1931.

⁶⁸*PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XVII, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 2931 (IV Chi 2878), October 21, 1931; Memo (zu IV Chi 2337), December, 1931.

posed by the Manchurian incident.⁶⁹ As a matter of fact, the termination of the dispute between Nanking and the Hamburg-America Line and the relatively mild manner of the Nationalists was directly attributable to a desire on the part of T.V. Soong for German support in the League of Nations in the settlement of the Manchurian crisis.⁷⁰

During 1930-1931, the size of the German military advisory staff in Nanking continued to grow as did its cooperation with the *Reichswehr*. More officers joined Wetzell's staff, and the group (now perhaps more properly termed a "mission") gradually lost the character developed by Bauer.⁷¹ Many well-known German military figures can be linked with the advisory staff from this point onward. For example, during the 1930's the advisory staff was headed in succession by *Generaloberst* Hans von Seeckt⁷² and *Generalleutnant* Alexander

⁶⁹In November, the southern leaders negotiated with Nanking to effect a settlement. In December, Chiang Kai-shek briefly resigned the Presidency, Wang Ching-wei and Sun Fo entered a reformed Cabinet, but Chiang was soon found to be indispensable. By the summer of 1932, he was again in control. See Clubb, 182-83.

⁷⁰*PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Waffen*, XVII, Legation liason at Nanking to AA, No. 1065 (IV Chi 2849), October 23, 1931.

⁷¹Kriebel and other like-minded advisors gradually lost influence. The former returned to Germany in early 1932 and strengthened his ties with the National Socialists. Kriebel returned to Shanghai in 1934 as Consul-General. During the 1930's he used his direct influence with Hitler to further various schemes, and reduce the current *Wehrmacht* involvement with the Canton regime. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, VII, *Völkischer Beobachter* (interview with Kriebel), August 25, 1933; *PA, Abt. IV, Po 10 Chi: Vertretungen in China*, II, Kriebel to AA, No. B. 65, February 21, 1936; *BA, R 43 I/57*, Neurath to Lammers, RK 4026 (Kriebel report transmitted to Berlin in Trautmann to AA, No. 32 *ganz geh.*, Enclosure, May 17, 1935), May 17, 1935; *MA, W 02-44/7*, Kriebel to Peiping, No. 9, May 13, 1935; Jacobsen, 27, 466; Weinberg, 341-42, and *passim*.

⁷²See Meier-Welcker, 641-84.

von Falkenhausen.⁷³ Other well-known officers either approached the Chinese or were contacted by Nanking with a view to strengthening the advisory staff. For example, General Hans Kundt, the so-called "White Condor," was requested to join the advisory staff by Nanking,⁷⁴ but he refused and returned to Bolivia to lead the Bolivian army in the Chaco War of 1930.⁷⁵ Early in 1932, representatives of Chiang Kai-shek unsuccessfully attempted to secure the services of ex-Defense Minister Wilhelm Groener to take over direction of the technical and administrative staff.⁷⁶ Apparently, General von Schleicher after his fall from power in 1933 expressed an interest in joining the advisory staff.⁷⁷ General Wilhelm Faupel initially planned to accompany Seeckt in 1934,⁷⁸ but changed his plans.

The military authorities in Nanking were just as eager to cement

⁷³In April 1932 Falkenhausen was approached by Marshal Chang Hsüeh-liang with a view to securing his services, but he declined the offer because of Chang's current domestic difficulties in the north. PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, VI, Memo Schoen (IV Chi 1382/32), May 2, 1932. Falkenhausen went out to China in 1934 with Seeckt on the latter's second trip, and headed the advisory staff from 1935 to 1938. After the group's recall in the latter year by Hitler, Falkenhausen was again put on the active list. During the war he served as *Militär-befehlshaber* in northern France and Belgium; he also maintained contacts with the military opposition against Hitler. Having survived both the July 20 plot and the war, he subsequently was sentenced to twelve years imprisonment for war crimes. See Peter Hoffmann, *Widerstand-Staatsstreich-Attentat: Der Kampf der Opposition gegen Hitler* (München, 1969), *passim*; Weinberg, 124ff.; Drechsler, *passim*.

⁷⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, IV, WTB report, August 21, 1930.

⁷⁵Borcke, 304-07.

⁷⁶PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, VI, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 1717), June 7, 1932; Memo (e.o. IV Chi 1732), June 10, 1932.

⁷⁷BA, *Nachlass Bauer*, No. 62, 161.

⁷⁸PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, VII, Memo Altenburg (e.o. IV Chi 2654), December 6, 1933.

the military cooperation between Germany and China as were their counterparts in the *Reichswehr*. The Chinese even considered expanding the advisory staff to include naval personnel and solicited support from the German Navy. This could have created friction with the British however who currently had a naval mission in Nanking and, in response to the objections put forward by the Wilhelmstrasse and because of the German Navy's reluctance to become involved in such activities, its attitude toward Sino-German naval cooperation (as had been the case also in *Reichswehr*-Soviet cooperation) was reserved. Initially no support was forthcoming.⁷⁹ Large scale armament deals were worked out during 1931 which, although temporarily side-tracked because of the Sino-Japanese conflict, blossomed forth into extensive and intimate cooperation during the following years. Even in 1931, German armament sales to the Chinese were second only to those by Japan, their total value being 4.9 million Marks according to the Chinese Customs, 1.2 million Marks according to German government statistics.⁸⁰

⁷⁹MA, II M 62/2, *Reichswehrmin. Marineltg., Verschiedenes (Juli 1929-März 1931)*, Memo ("Über eine Besprechung zwischen dem Legationsrat Dr. Davi Yui von der Chinesischen Gesandtschaft Berlin und Korvettenkapitän Suadicanì am 27. März 1931"), 172-73; PA, Abt. IV, Po 14 Chi: Marine, I, Memo [re conversation Suadicanì with Altenburg] (e.o. IV Chi 761), April 16, 1931. Weinberg, 126, n. 25, mentions that there is information on "a German naval officer" in China, but it is not clear whether he is referring to Kapitän z. See a. D. Darmer or Korvettenkapitän a.D. Rave; in any case neither had direct contacts with the German naval command. Later, however, after military purchasing between the two countries increased, the German Navy was obligated by purchase contract to train Chinese naval cadets. For Hitler's order terminating the instruction of ten Chinese naval cadets, and the participation of Chinese naval officers in German U-boat training cruises, see PA, Abt. Geh. Akt., China, I, *Adjutantur der Wehrmacht beim Führer und RK.* to OKW, Br. B. No. 99/38 (Pol. I 606/38-g), March 2, 1938.

⁸⁰PA, Abt. Pol. IV, Po 3 China/Japan, adh., *Waffen*, I, Memorandum (e.o. IV Chi 364), February 6, 1933. In addition, the Nanking government planned to purchase "30 to 80 million Marks" worth of machinery for its own armament plants during the second half of 1931. This information was

To all of this the Wilhelmstrasse remained cool. In fact, it continued to oppose both the arms traffic with China⁸¹ and the employment of German ex-officers, particularly those of high rank,⁸² until the mid-1930's. The advice given in this matter by the foreign service personnel was henceforth ignored, and seemingly received no support from the higher political leadership; at least after 1933 such was certainly the case.⁸³ The Wilhelmstrasse had been out-flanked by the

passed to the Wilhelmstrasse by Davi Yui of the Trade Division in an unsuccessful effort to have it abandon its opposition to the military advisory group, and to solicit coordination of policy against armament traffic between Germany and Chinese regions autonomous of the Nanking regime. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, VI, Memo Lautenschlager [re breakfast meeting with Davi Yui and Ingwen Liang of the Chinese Legation] (e.o. IV Chi 1787), August 26, 1931.

⁸¹There is extensive evidence for this statement in the German Foreign Ministry documents; see, e.g., *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, VIII, Memo [general summary of German policy toward China] (IV Chi 895), April 24, 1934. See also, esp. for the period until 1933, *ibid.*, VI & VII, *passim*; *Abt. IV, Po 3 adh. Chi: Waffenlieferungen aus Anlass des Chin.-Jap. Konfliktes, 1931-1932*, I-II, *passim*; *Abt. IV, Po 3 adh. Chi: Chinesisch-Japanischer Konflikt*, I-XXXV, *passim*.

⁸²On the Wilhelmstrasse's attempts to dissuade General von Falkenhausen from entering Chinese service, see esp. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, VI, AA to *RWM* (IV Chi 1506), April 18, 1932; AA to Falkenhausen (IV Chi 1292), April 19, 1932. Seeckt was requested in October 1933 by Foreign Minister von Neurath not to accept Chiang Kai-shek's offer to assume leadership of the advisory staff. *PA, RM, 37 Chi, V*, Memo *Völkens* (e.o. IV Chi 2366), October 19, 1933. Neurath changed his mind in a matter of months (after discussions with the Defense Ministry), but the East Asia desk as well as Trautmann in Nanking and Dirksen in Tokyo remained opposed. For Wilhelmstrasse policy toward China generally during the Nazi period, see *DGFP, C*, I-V, *passim*; *DGFP, D*, I-XIII, *passim*. See also Drechsler, *passim*; and Weinberg, *passim*, for an excellent discussion of the period 1933-1936.

⁸³Although the advisory group never received "official" status, it is clear that the higher political leadership actively supported its presence in China. The legal façade that these were "individual German ex-officers under personal contract" to Chiang Kai-shek is discredited by the fact that Hitler, when political policy required, was able to order them home.

German army,⁸⁴ and henceforth was able only to work to minimize the foreign policy repercussions of Sino-German military cooperation.⁸⁵ From this point forward the Wilhelmstrasse gradually relinquished the paramount role it had played throughout the 1920's in formulating and implementing German policy toward China.

⁸⁴An interesting footnote illustrating the German military's non-ideological view of the advisory group is the request of Major Rössing (*T3/Attaché-Gruppe*), an officer on Chief of the General Staff Ludwig Beck's staff, in May 1934 for the Chinese to hire some officers who had been released from the German army because of the "Aryan paragraph." The Chinese, although sympathetic, were obligated to refuse because the Nazis had already made their position clear that they regarded "non-Aryans" not to be proper representatives of the German "Volk." See Klaus-Jürgen Müller, *Das Heer und Hitler: Armee und nationalsozialistisches Regime 1933-1940* (Stuttgart, 1969), Document No. 24, 621-23. See also Robert J. O'Neil, *The German Army and the Nazi Party, 1933-39* (London, 1965), 76ff., on the Army's attitude toward the "Aryan paragraph."

⁸⁵In this connection, the report passed confidentially to Germany by the Nanking authorities that French Radical Socialist Edouard Herriot (Vice-Premier in 1934) had expressed his regret that the Chinese had seen fit to employ a German military mission is not without interest. Herriot was reported as saying that in view of the deterioration of relations between France and Germany, and the reports in 1934 of a secret German-Japanese alliance, the Nanking government was running the risk of becoming involved in a war. He observed that the military mission naturally was privy to all China's military secrets, and the pressure of circumstances could force that country into an unnatural alliance with Japan and Germany, thereby "placing herself in the danger, similarly as with Turkey in 1914," of becoming involved in a war because of the activities of a German military mission. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 3 Chi: Politische Beziehungen zwischen fremden Staaten, China-Frankreich*, I, AA to Embassies Paris, Moscow, Tokyo, and Legation Peiping, n.d. [Dec., 1934]. Both Nanking and Berlin were worried about a possible propaganda campaign arising from the rumors of a German-Japanese alliance.

CHAPTER X

A SURVEY OF SINO-GERMAN TRADE AND COMMERCE, 1919-1931

Basic to the policy of the German Foreign Ministry toward China after the First World War and well into the 1930's was the desire to reestablish and enlarge Sino-German commercial and industrial cooperation. To this end, in-so-far as it was possible with respect to wider goals of German foreign policy, political ambitions in East Asia were subordinated to those of trade and commerce. It is this fact that gives German policy in this region its apparent negative cast, i.e., of reacting to events in an effort to avoid complications and friction. Further, to some degree the fundamental commercial orientation of the Wilhelmstrasse's policy explains the close working relation developed after 1918 between the German Foreign Ministry and German trading circles with interests in the Far East.

Prior to World War I, German commerce with China had been on the up-swing since the lease of Kiaochow in 1898.¹ During this period, German investments in China showed an increase, both in business enterprises,

¹Between 1905 and 1913, Chinese imports from Germany increased from Hk. Tails 14,000,000 to 28,000,000 and exports to Germany from Hk. Tails 5,300,000 to 17,000,000, increases of 191 per cent and 317 per cent respectively. Total trade between the two countries during the period increased by 224 per cent. However, trade with Germany in 1913 still amounted to only 4.7 per cent of China's total trade. See Ho Ping-yin, "A Survey of Sino-German Trade," *The People's Tribune* (Shanghai), VII (1934), 82; Djang, 226-32.

notably railroad ventures,² and in Chinese government loan obligations.³ German merchants in China were particularly enterprising, and by 1914 German influence was pervasive in Chinese commercial life, although many complaints were made in Germany that the German business community in China served the interests of countries other than Germany.⁴ The coming of the European war marked the temporary loss of Germany's economic position and influence in China. Almost two decades would elapse before Germany again would play a role in China's economic life on a scale approaching that of pre-1914.

The dismantling of Germany's economic influence in China began immediately upon the outbreak of war in Europe. The Entente Powers, intent upon annihilating German trade with and in China, cooperated in seizing and liquidating German firms within their concessions, in using an effective Black List designed to strangle German firms operating in Chinese territory, and in pressuring the Chinese government to take action against German commercial endeavors.⁵ The Japanese seizure of Kaiochow in 1914 eliminated Germany's main commercial center in China, and the entry of China herself into the war in 1917 led to the seizure of Germany's remaining concessions and termination of extraterritoriality

²See Schrecker, 87ff.

³A reasoned estimate gives German investments in China as of 1914 as \$136,000,000 U.S. in business investment and \$127,596,000 in government obligations, a total of \$263,596,000, representing 16.4 per cent of all foreign investments in China. This is a marked increase over the German investment of \$164,282,000 in 1904, which however amounted to 20.9 per cent of foreign investment in China. See C. F. Remer, *Foreign Investments in China* (1st ed., rev.; New York, 1968), 637-52.

⁴Djang, 230-31.

⁵*Ibid.*, 230-32.

and other privileges.⁶ A total suspension of trade between the two countries ensued. The deportation after the armistice of the bulk of the large German community in China (the third largest in 1917 behind the American and British) completed the attempt to eliminate Germany as a trade factor in China.⁷

The end of the war and the subsequent Versailles settlement brought the realization to German commercial circles that henceforth Germany would be faced with an up-hill battle in regaining her trading position in China. Although not legally admitted until the 1921 Sino-German Treaty, for all practical purposes German rights of extra-territoriality, given the new atmosphere in China, could be considered irrevocably lost. The Allied Powers were expected to remain hostile and attempt to obstruct the reappearance of Germany as a trading nation in the China market. Furthermore, Chinese markets previously dominated by Germany had been lost to the United States and Japan during the war and it was not likely that these could be regained.⁸

These points emerge clearly from the discussions in German trading circles after the war about the new position of Germany in the Far East. By 1919, two associations in particular assumed the representation of German commercial interests in Asia and led the way in formulating the basic principles that would govern the cooperation

⁶ See Chapter I, *supra*.

⁷ Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 3-16.

⁸ Djang, 233. Aniline dyes and the toy market were two areas in which Germany lost her dominance. With regard to dyes, although Germany after the war rapidly regained predominance in this field among foreign countries, her exclusion from the trade during the war had stimulated the growth of a competitive native Chinese dye industry. The toy import business was totally lost to Japan.

between the German trading interests in the Far East and the Foreign Ministry during the 1920's. The first, the *Ostasiatischer Verein*, (OAV), had been founded in 1900 by the major Hamburg and Bremen trading houses to coordinate German economic activities in the Far East. Before the expulsion of the German community in 1919, most German Chambers of Commerce in China had joined this association.⁹ The views of the OAV after the war were particularly influential in German government circles, and during the 1920's it enjoyed very close connections with the East Asia desk in the Foreign Ministry. It is not excessive to say that the Wilhelmstrasse coordinated its policy in China to a large extent with the interests of the OAV.

The second organization of importance was the *Verband für den Fernen Osten*, a 1919 merger of the older *Deutsch-Asiatische Gesellschaft* and the *Deutsch-chinesische Verband*.¹⁰ From January 1920 on, the society published a fortnightly journal, the *Ostasiatische Rundschau*, which gained the reputation of being a semi-official organ of the Foreign Ministry. The VFO, like the OAV, interested itself in furthering German economic relations with the Far East, particularly Siam (Thailand), Japan, and China, and also engaged in enlarging and supporting German cultural activities in that region.

Initially the debates conducted within the German government and with the various interests groups regarding Germany's future role in Asia

⁹PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft, Wirtschaft 6: Wirtschaftliche Bez. Chinas zu Deutschland, I, Memo [Survey of German economic ties with China], n.d. [October, 1928]. See also Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 30-32.

¹⁰Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 30-31. Causey, *ibid.*, states that a member of the Foreign Ministry was a member of the board of the VFO but I find no evidence that this was so.

was not public,¹¹ However, once the Versailles settlement had demonstrated that Germany was not to be permitted to negotiate with the Allies the conditions of her return to China, the discussion entered the public arena. A large number of books and articles appeared relating to future German policy toward China,¹² two of which may be cited as having especially important influence. The first was of immediate significance, the second foreshadowed future development.

In 1920, a returned China-German, Dr. Friedrich W. Mohr, later the business manager of the OAV, published his *Gedanken zur neudeutschen Chinapolitik*.¹³ Mohr had been an official in the Kiaochow leased-territory and at one time had been employed by the Chinese government in the Salt Administration in Shantung. His book indicated a recognition of the harsh realities that faced Germany in post-war China - loss of extraterritoriality, unfavorable tariff rates, pressure and competition from the Treaty Powers. He recommended that henceforth Germany pursue a "friendly" policy toward China, recognizing China's aspirations to sovereignty and equality. He did not expect that loss of extraterritoriality would result in particularly serious disadvantages for German businessmen. Any slight discomfiture caused by Chinese jurisdiction would be greatly off-set by the good will which Germany would win by voluntarily relinquishing unequal rights. The same principle obviously applied to the recognition of China's autonomous status in customs matters.

¹¹ See Chapter I, *supra*.

¹² Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 32.

¹³ Neuweid, 1920. I have used an extensive summary and commentary in *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, II, *Anlage* (VII Chi 889), May 10, 1921.

While Mohr was speaking for trading interests in Germany, M. Th. Strewe, another repatriated German and the business manager of the so-called *Chinesische Verein Deutscher Ingenieure* (presumably an organization founded to publicize his program), attempted to stimulate interest in far-reaching participation by German industry in China's reconstruction. In a lecture delivered on April 21, 1920,¹⁴ Strewe argued that countries like Russia and China desperately needed German technical and industrial assistance in defending themselves against "British imperialism." China was ripe for industrialization - the older conservative views of China's previous ruling class had been swept aside by the Chinese revolution and the wartime events. China had all the prerequisites for industrialization: she had abundant natural resources in anthracite coal, antimony, zinc, wolfram, and petroleum, she possessed a large, if unskilled labor force among which European ideas of class conflict between capital and labor did not yet exist [!], and a potential market of some 300 million. From the German point of view, participation in the industrialization of China would provide an outlet for German industrial products, machinery, tools, apparatus, technical instruments, and so on. There also would ensue an increase in Chinese production of raw materials and foodstuffs from which Germany would benefit. But the most important result would be the transplanting (*Verpflanzung*) of German industry to China. Not only should filial branches of German firms be established in China, Strewe argued, but a completely independent and self-sufficient Chinese economy should be targeted. In this fashion, Germany and China could complement one another - China absorbing German heavy industrial products denied a

¹⁴PA, *Unterstaatssekretär für Wirtschaft*, W. 186 II, China: *Wirtschaftlage*, II, M. Th. Strewe, "The Industrialization of China and the Economic Reconstruction of Germany," n.d.

market by the Entente and in turn providing Germany with raw materials vital for her own industrial plant. Of particular importance would be the construction of industries forbidden to Germany by the Versailles Treaty. Strewe envisioned virtual integration of the two economies, and at the base of his argument lay political motives. By developing China, Germany would be building up a potential ally, an ally that would provide a "bulwark against the still dominant threat of Anglo-Saxon political and economic imperialism."¹⁵

Official action on Strewe's ideas would have to wait for a more auspicious future.¹⁶ By 1924, when a degree of stability had returned to Germany, China entered into a period of turmoil that would last until the victory of the Nationalists in 1928 brought a relative degree of centralized government to that country. True, Sino-German industrial cooperation was a theme that continually surfaced in the relations between

¹⁵ See also the argument, *ibid.*, "Thus German industry will be established in China under Chinese cover-names, which will serve German enterprises as a reserve if home industry is paralyzed or destroyed by internal disturbances, or if England should be successful in excluding German industry from world markets." The similarity of Strewe's argument with the opinions of General Chu Ho-chung (and of Sun Yat-sen) suggests that Chu had been in contact with Strewe during his 1921 visit to Germany in search of assistance and advisors. See Chapter II, *supra*.

¹⁶ Later, in 1930, Strewe, who meanwhile had become an editor of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* (regarded as an organ of the Reich Association of German Industry [*Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie*]), accompanied the German Industrial Study Commission to China. See *infra*, 355ff. On the origins of the *Reichsverband*, Gerald D. Feldmann, "German Business Between War and Revolution: The Origins of the Stinnes-Legien Agreement," in Gerhardt Ritter, ed., *Entstehung und Wandel der modernen Gesellschaft: Festschrift für Hans Rosenberg zum 65. Geburtstag* (Berlin, 1970), 312-41. After 1927, 70 per cent of the shares of the DAZ were held by heavy industry. See Henry Ashby Turner, Jr., "The Ruhrlande: Secret Cabinet of Heavy Industry in the Weimar Republic," *Central European History*, III, No. 3 (Sept., 1970), 195-228. (Shortly before his death in April 1924, the industrialist Hugo Stinnes had gained control of the paper.)

Germany and China during the 1920's (*viz.* - Sun Yat-sen, Bauer, Amann),¹⁷ but not until 1929 did the idea gain concerted support in German industrial circles.

Mohr's reasoning, on the other hand, represented a more realistic assessment of the changed political, economic, and ideological realities in both the Far East and Europe. And his program, reflecting the aspirations of German trading firms interested in China, corresponded exactly with the policy pursued by the Wilhelmstrasse in the reestablishment of relations with China,¹⁸ and found expression in the terms of the Sino-German Treaty of May 20, 1921.¹⁹

Even prior to the conclusion of this agreement though, Germany had begun the recovery of her commercial position in China. Her efforts were assisted by the fact the deportation of German nationals had worked very unevenly. The Chinese had been forced by Entente pressure to expel the Germans, but neither the United States nor Japan fully supported this

¹⁷See Chapters II, IV, and VII, *supra*. Trebitsch-Lincoln, 245-55, claims that he and his associates approached Stinnes in the autumn of 1923 for a 25 million Gold Mark loan for Wu P'ei-fu which would be guaranteed by Chinese natural resources. Stinnes was not interested, but, through Bauer, Trebitsch-Lincoln signed an agreement with the "Knoll industrial concern" - which turned out to be a small furniture maker in Vienna!

¹⁸See, e.g., the exposition of German Foreign Ministry policy by Knipping to a representative of the Japanese Foreign Office in *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, I, Memo Knipping (VII Jap 665), September 28, 1920. Carr, *German-Soviet Relations*, 12, observes that the founding of the *Reichsverband* "signalized the predominance of heavy industry, notably in the person of Stinnes, in German industrial policy," whose interest lay "at home . . . in armaments" and abroad "in access to the markets of the industrially undeveloped countries of eastern Europe and Asia." However, the policy of the victorious Entente Powers in 1919 to exclude Germany from "western" (controlled) markets meant, in the case of China, that German heavy industry was effectively barred until the appearance of a government in that country willing to challenge the western powers and invite German investment. During the 1920's, the bulk of German exports to China consisted of chemical products and light manufacturing goods.

¹⁹See Chapter I, *supra*.

move. Thus in regions where these two powers had a measure of influence (Shantung and the Yangtze valley respectively), German nationals remained relatively unaffected by the deportation program. Nevertheless, of the estimated 2900 German who had resided in China in 1917, some 2000 were repatriated from Shanghai in March 1919.²⁰ However, they immediately began to filter back into China, so that by 1925 there were once again some 2500 German nationals in the country.²¹ The number of German firms followed a similar pattern. In 1913, there were some 296 German firms in China,²² by 1919 only two recognizable German companies,²³ by 1921

²⁰Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 3-16. Allied pressure also completed the elimination of German nationals from the Chinese civil service. The German government ultimately (1930) paid RM 99,324 in compensation to those released as a result of the war and subsequent events. There had been 138 German nationals in the Maritime Customs, 11 in the Post Office, 3 in the Salt Administration, 1 in the Accountancy Office, and 3 in the Water Control Administration. See BA, R2/838, Memo (II 3 31236/30), n.d.

²¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: *China-Deutschland*, III, Memo Bethcke (*für den Herrn Reichskanzler: China*), March 23, 1925.

²²Remer, 652. The history of all the German firms in China followed roughly the same pattern - expulsion from the foreign concessions in 1914, from the German ones in 1917, and from China itself in 1919. Some companies were able to save some of their business by employing foreigners, but all lost their property and most of their capital. Siemssen & Co., Hamburg, may be taken as a typical German import firm in China. It was founded in 1846 in Canton by G. T. Siemssen, who returned in 1859 to Hamburg and established a parent company. During the remainder of the century, the firm expanded its business with China in the import-export field, and established branch offices in China's major commercial centers. By 1914, it possessed much real estate in the various concessions and in Shantung. The war and its aftermath cost the firm its entire property in China and virtually all its capital. Nevertheless, it again entered the China trade in the early 1920's and was one of the major firms by the end of the decade. See BA, R2/13264, "Short Developmental History of the Enterprise," Siemssen & Co., Hamburg, n.d. [February 8, 1934]. Similar information for most China-firms can be found in the files of the Ministry of Finance now deposited with the *Bundesarchiv*, Koblenz.

²³Djang, 235.

some 92,²⁴ increasing to over 400 by 1925.²⁵

The German firms were aggressive in pursuit of their lost business. In the dye industry, for example, German firms cut prices and offered long-term credit on easy terms to the Chinese distributors. Such tactics, coupled with the preference of Chinese consumers for German dyes, led to a rapid regaining of the import market, although it was much reduced due to the competition of the native dye industry stimulated by the war. As early as the last three months of 1919, German dyes were again being imported into China in significant amounts. By 1925, Germany controlled 62.8 per cent of the importation of foreign dyes to China.²⁶ Similar patterns of recovery occurred in other fields as well - the export of tea, for example, or the import of woolen goods and yarns.

Both German and Chinese Maritime Customs trade statistics show a steady increase in Sino-German trade. There is some difficulty in interpreting the two sets of statistics because of the different methods of calculation. The Chinese Maritime Customs recorded exports and imports simply according to the country to or from which the goods were shipped, while the German statistics were based on the actual consuming or producing country. For example, Chinese commodities purchased in Netherlands by German merchants would be shown in the Chinese statistics as exports to Holland, while in the German figures after trans-shipment to Germany they would count as German imports from China. Similarly, the large volume of goods purchased by China in Czechoslovakia and shipped through

²⁴Remer, 652.

²⁵PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland, III, Memo Bethcke, March 23, 1925.

²⁶Djang, 234-35.

Hamburg or other German ports would appear in the Chinese figuring as imports from Germany, but not at all in the German statistics relevant to China. Thus the total export to China in German calculations is always smaller than the import from Germany recorded in the Chinese statistics, and vice-versa.

Chinese Maritime Customs statistics show that by 1924, only three years after the conclusion of the Sino-German Treaty, total trade between Germany and China exceeded (in Haikuan Taels) the previous ante-bellum high point reached in 1913. A steady growth in total trade between the two countries continued, with slight pauses in 1925 and 1927 caused by the domestic disturbances in China during those years, until by 1931 the total trade between the two countries exceeded Hk. Tls. 106,000,000, more than twice (235 per cent) the best pre-war figure.

CHINA'S TRADE WITH GERMANY DURING 1905-1932 (in Hk. Tls. 1000)²⁷

YEAR	FOREIGN TRADE: CHINA'S TOTAL			CHINA'S TRADE WITH GERMANY			(IN PERCENTAGE)
	IMPORTS	EXPORTS	TOTAL	IMPORTS	EXPORTS	TOTAL	
1905	477,100	227,888	674,988	14,846	5,377	20,223	2.99
1913	570,162	403,305	973,468	28,302	17,025	45,327	4.65
1919	646,997	630,809	1,277,807	-	163	164	-
1920	762,250	541,631	1,303,881	5,417	1,767	7,179	0.50
1921	906,122	601,255	1,507,377	13,348	6,773	20,122	1.30
1922	945,049	654,891	1,599,941	24,744	9,804	34,548	2.20
1923	923,402	752,917	1,676,320	32,456	11,914	44,370	2.60
1924	1,018,210	771,784	1,789,995	38,687	15,949	54,636	3.00
1925	947,864	776,352	1,724,217	32,510	16,427	48,938	2.80
1926	1,124,221	864,294	1,988,516	45,677	17,760	63,438	3.10
1927	1,012,931	918,619	1,931,551	39,345	20,363	59,708	3.10
1928	1,195,969	991,341	2,187,324	55,696	22,824	78,521	3.60
1929	1,265,778	1,015,687	2,281,466	67,075	22,457	89,533	3.90
1930	1,309,755	894,843	2,204,599	69,105	23,361	92,466	4.20
1931	1,427,576	887,450	2,315,027	83,514	23,138	106,652	4.60
1932	1,049,249	492,641	1,541,888	71,803	29,824	101,626	6.50

²⁷ Table adapted from Ho Ping-yin, 84. The exchange rate on the Haikuan Tael used by the Chinese Maritime Customs varied during the 1920's but as a rough rule of thumb the rate of 1 Hk. Tl. to 3 German Gold Marks can be used.

These figures show that Germany had regained her 1913 position in China's total trade pattern (4.65 per cent) by 1931 (4.60 per cent).

Another measure of growth of total Sino-German trade is that it increased almost fivefold between 1921 and 1931, while British trade remained at a standstill.²⁸

GERMANY'S FOREIGN TRADE WITH CHINA (in million RM)²⁹

YEAR	GERMAN IMPORTS FROM CHINA	Total German Imports (Percentages)	GERMAN EXPORTS TO CHINA	Total German Exports (Percentages)
1911	103.9	1.1	77.2	1.0
1912	116.1	1.1	87.7	1.0
1913	130.9	1.2	130.0	1.3
1920	-	-	-	-
1921	-	-	-	-
1922	-	-	-	-
1923	97.3	1.6	130.0	1.7
1924	127.5	1.4	113.3	1.7
1925	228.6	1.8	118.0	1.7
1926	196.3	2.0	151.5	1.5
1927	265.1	1.9	121.0	1.1
1928	329.8	2.3	169.8	1.4
1929	370.7	2.8	185.1	1.4
1930	297.7	-	149.8	-
1931	215.5	-	140.7	-

These figures show that during the 1920's China never figured as a major trading partner relative to the overall pattern of German trade. Nevertheless, there was a steady rate of growth shown by both German exports to China and by Chinese exports to Germany, the latter during a period when Germany pursued an import restricting policy in an attempt

²⁸Djang, 235.

²⁹PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft, Wirtschaft 1A: Beteiligung Deutschlands, III, "Bericht der China Studienkommission des Reichsverbandes der Deutschen Industrie," (IV Chi 2563), November, 1930; Wirtschaft 6, II, Memo (IV Chi 3058), November 8, 1932. This table is a composite of these reports.

to establish a favorable balance of trade.³⁰ These trends were reversed briefly with the coming of the Great Depression.

Germany's rapid reentry into the China market despite the handicaps of loss of extraterritoriality, sequestration and liquidation of German property, Allied hostility, domestic economic crisis, and, not least, the difficulty in finding financing in the Far East prior to the agreements of June 6/7 1924 (which reestablished the *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank*), must in large part be attributed to the friendly attitude of the Chinese. Even before the war, China to a large degree had been relatively pro-German and the state of war between the two countries after 1917 did not substantially alter this outlook. On the contrary, the feeling was intensified as a result of the harsh treatment Germany received at the hands of the Allies in 1919 and was furthered by the policy of Berlin of acceding to the demands of China for equal treatment, the policy which led to the Sino-German Treaty of 1921.

Moreover, German products during the post-war period continued to enjoy their favorable reputation in China, as did services provided by German businessmen.³¹ The arrangements worked out between China and Germany in the June 6/7, 1924 Exchange of Notes led to a restoration of a large amount of German property and to the compensation of German nationals (by Germany) for expropriation during the war, once more setting the German trading community in China on a solid basis.

Trade between the two countries was of a complementary nature. German imports from China were mainly of an agricultural nature (in 1932 some 67 per cent being in foodstuffs), and in raw materials or

³⁰ Ho Ping-yin, 86.

³¹ For details, see Djang, 217-37.

semi-manufactured goods (29 per cent in 1932). On the other hand, German exports to China predominantly were in manufactured or processed goods, reaching a high of 93.4 per cent in 1932. Chemical products dominated for most of the decade, but were increasingly overtaken by metal products and machinery, until these two items by 1932 made up the bulk of German products flowing into China.³²

German shipping also returned to China with amazing rapidity. The first ship showing the German flag arrived at Shanghai late in 1921. The following year, regular passenger service was resumed by the great German steamship companies, notably the North-German Lloyd and the Hamburg-America Line (HAPAG).³³ In that year, there were 126 in- and out-clearings of German vessels from Chinese ports, rising to 604 in 1925. Other German shipping companies, such as Rickmer's, also entered the merchant service with China, contributing to a rise in both tonnage and annual clearances during the entire decade.³⁴ Nevertheless, Germany had not regained her pre-war position in shipping by 1930.³⁵

Sino-German cultural relations never approached the scale of those China had with other western nations (especially America),³⁶ but

³²For details, see the extensive breakdown of German exports to China in *PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Wirtschaft 6, I, passim*. Generally, see Ho Ping-yin, 86-95; Causey, *German Policy Towards China, passim*; *PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Wirtschaft 1, I, passim*.

³³On the pre-war beginnings of these companies in Germany-China navigation, see Schrecker, *passim*.

³⁴*PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Wirtschaft 6, I, Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, no No., July 1, 1927; Causey, German Policy Towards China, 52-53.*

³⁵Remer, 652.

³⁶See James C. Thomson, Jr., *While China Faced West: American Reformers in Nationalist China, 1928-1937* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), *passim*.

nevertheless also showed a steady revival after 1919. The war and the subsequent policy of the Allies obliged Germany to begin again virtually from scratch. The German government and various private associations (largely financed by German business) had supported a medical, technical, and engineering school in Shanghai before the war. The German Navy had administered a college (*Hochschule*)³⁷ at Tsingtao in the leased-territory for the instruction of Chinese students in the German language and in technical subjects. Following the Japanese seizure of Kiaochow, both the faculties and students of these two schools were amalgamated and a new school, the Tung-Chi University, was founded with Chinese assistance at Woosung near Shanghai. This school continued under German influence, financed by local businessmen and the Provincial administration of Kiangsu, until 1919 when Entente pressure forced the deportation of the German faculty members.

When the German government resolved to reestablish commercial relations with China, renewed German participation in instruction at the college level in China was viewed as a necessary adjunct. Not only was the rebuilding of German influence in higher education regarded as an affair of honor ("*Ehrensache*" - as the German Navy put it) and a sign that the French would not be permitted to expel German influence from China,³⁸ but the pre-war assumptions governing German cultural activity

³⁷The *Deutsch-Chinesische Hochschule* opened in 1909 and by 1913 had 368 pupils. It was divided into a lower school (similar to a *Gymnasium*) and an upper school which taught law, natural sciences, engineering, forestry, agriculture, and medicine. The Provincial government of Shantung contributed 40,000 Marks annually for its upkeep. For further details on this school, and on other German pre-war educational endeavors in Shantung, see Schrecker, 241-46.

³⁸BA, R43I/56, *Reichswehrministerium, Chef der Admiralität* to *Reichskanzlei*, No. Adm. No. E III 4627 (Memo Admiral von Trotha [countersigned Gustav Noske]) (RK 2341), February 19, 1920.

still held: instruction of Chinese students in the German language and technology created potential customers and markets.

These arguments found favor in influential circles in the German government.³⁹ In the summer of 1920, the government decided to support financially the Tung-Chi University and to promote the return of German academic personnel.⁴⁰ Notwithstanding the financial difficulties of these years, a substantial sum was provided by the German government to the *Verband für den Fernen Osten* which after 1919 administered German assistance to Tung-Chi University. By 1924, the school employed 23 German lecturers (*Dozenten*) in the medical and technical faculties. These departments had about 100 students, with another 230 receiving instruction in the German language.⁴¹ Individual German scholars also accepted employment at other Chinese universities.⁴²

As Sino-German trade and commerce expanded during the 1920's, German government support of educational activities in China increased apace. The Foreign Ministry subsidized three German missionary-directed

³⁹ Foreign Minister Hermann Müller, a week before he became Chancellor, wrote that he considered resumption of German cultural activity in China "extraordinarily important." *Ibid.*, Müller to *Reichskanzlei*, AA IIIId 1519 (RK 3026), March 20, 1920.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Boyé (Berlin) to *Reichskanzlei*, IX v 3347 (RK 6808), *Anlage* (AA to *Reichsfinanzministerium*), June 14, 1920.

⁴¹ PA, Abt. IV, Kol. Po 1 Chi: *Kolonialpolitik im Allgemeinen*, I, Dr. Otto Köbner, "Deutsche Kolonial- und Kulturpolitik in China," (*Sonderabdruck aus den Verhandlungen des Deutschen Kolonialkongresses 1924*), December, 1924. This is a plea for Germany to intensify her cultural "mission" in China. See also PA, Abt. IV, Po 25 Chi: *Deutschtum*, III, Consulate-General Shanghai to AA, No. 23, February 8, 1930.

⁴² PA, Abt. IV, Po 17 Chi: *Unterrichtswesen*, VII, Memo Altenburg (e.o. IV Chi 362), February 3, 1933. In 1933, there were 30 German professors at Tung-Chi University, 12 at Sun Yat-sen University in Canton, and 18 at the Imperial University and Tsing Hua College in Peiping.

high-schools (*Mittelschulen*),⁴³ and by 1930 was well along with plans to found a German high-school at Hankow to provide instruction for students desiring to go on to Tung-Chi University.⁴⁴ The overall program after 1929 was aimed at concentrating all German government educational efforts in China at Tung-Chi⁴⁵ in view of the futility of trying to compete financially on a serious scale with France, Japan, or the United States. (The latter country in particular was extremely influential in Chinese educational endeavors because of the funds available to the American government as a result of the early allocation of a portion of the Boxer Indemnity to educational activity in China, and the support of a very large American missionary effort.) It was planned to expand Tung-Chi to include faculties of law,⁴⁶ political science (*Staatswissenschaft*), and

⁴³The *St. Franz Xaver Kolleg*, Tsining; the *Allgemeine Evangelisch-Protestantische Missionverein* (Weimar Mission), *Deutsch-Chinesische Seminar*, Tsingtao; and the *Berliner Mission, Deutsch-Chinesische Mittelschule*, Canton. PA, Abt. IV, Po 26 Chi: *Politische und Kulturelle Propaganda*, II, Borch to AA, No. 4096 (IV Chi 407), *Anlage* (Memo Kuhlborn, October 28, 1929), November 20, 1929. See also Schrecker, 243.

⁴⁴PA, Abt. IV, Po 26 Chi: *Propaganda*, II, Memo Lautenschlager, February 19, 1930.

⁴⁵The limited scope of German influence in Chinese higher education can be measured against the total of 111 universities in China in 1934 (28 National, 32 Provincial, and 51 private). Further statistical data on Chinese education during the period can be derived from the official publication of the Nanking government, T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China: A Record of Progress and Achievement in Fact and Figures* (Shanghai, 1935), Chapter IV, "Educational Reforms," 69-91 (no mention is made of German endeavors); and from Chow Tse-tung, *passim*.

⁴⁶Since modern Chinese law was heavily indebted to that of Japan (which the Wilhelmstrasse and others widely assumed at the time had found its modern inspiration in that of Germany), it was thought that this was a discipline in which Germany could excel. Although influence of Germany's modern civil code can be seen in the Japanese reforms at the turn of the century, other European countries also provided principles and rules. See G. B. Sansom, *The Western World and Japan: A Study in the Interaction of European and Asiatic Cultures* (New York, 1950), 444-50. In the *Hochschule* at Tsingtao before 1914, both law and political economy had been taught, but apparently had not survived its incorporation into Tung-Chi University.

perhaps a music academy.⁴⁷

It was now recognized that the earlier assumptions underlying Germany's educational policy in China had not proved valid. Simply training Chinese students in German technological matters did not bring nearly the degree of influence attained by the other western countries, notably the United States. In the ministries of the Nanking government (excepting the Ministry of War), not a single civil servant of higher rank had a German education. Henceforth, it was argued, Germany should concentrate on German cultural accomplishments, emphasizing Germany's reputation as a nation of "poets and thinkers."⁴⁸

Nevertheless, it was Germany's technical accomplishments that continued to attract Chinese students. A large number of young Chinese studied in Germany during the interwar period (although never in the numbers that went to France, Japan, and the United States). The Foreign Ministry helped in this process by encouraging and subsidizing scholarship programs. As before World War I, when seven out of the nine doctorates earned in Europe by Chinese students had been from Germany, German advanced degrees continued to predominate in terms of numbers. The major fields of specialization were science, engineering, and medicine.⁴⁹

⁴⁷PA, Abt. IV, Po 26 Chi: Propaganda, II, Borch to AA, No. 4096 (IV Chi 407), November 20, 1929.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Tung-li Yuan, "A Guide to Doctoral Dissertations by Chinese Students in Continental Europe, 1907-1962," reprint from *Chinese Cultural Quarterly*, V, Nos. 3, 4, and VI, No. 1 (1963-1964). Between 1919-1945, 581 Chinese received doctorates in France, 732 in Germany. However, in the years 1932-1934 alone, 1197 Chinese students were sent abroad by the Nanking government for advanced graduate work, presumably the majority to the United States. See T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 77. (Y. C. Wang, *Chinese Intellectuals and the West, 1872-1949* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1966), is devoted in large part to the large numbers of Chinese youth who studied abroad, but virtually ignores Germany.)

In order to promote Sino-German commercial relations, the Foreign Ministry also worked to counteract English and French press influence in China. Wartime propaganda and the continued hostility of the Entente in China were thought to have eroded previously favorable public attitudes toward Germany and German products. Thus a limited program was also begun in this area: starting in 1920 efforts were made to propagandize through the Chinese press, and in 1922 the Wilhelmstrasse financially assisted in the establishment of a printing company, the Peiyang Press A. G., Tientsin.⁵⁰

Other efforts to expand Sino-German cultural relations during the 1920's include the establishment in Germany of various societies designed to enlarge German knowledge and interest in China. The Foreign Ministry played an active role behind the scenes in the foundation in 1926 of the *China Institut* at Frankfurt a. M. (The famous Sinologist Richard Wilhelm, before 1914 the head for many years of the *Deutsch-Chinesisches Seminar* at Tsingtao,⁵¹ was its guiding spirit.) This scholarly institution worked to improve Sino-German understanding by publishing sinological research and providing translations of Chinese literature and other items of interest to the German public. The *Gesellschaft für Ostasiatische Kunst* in Berlin (established January 23, 1926) and the *Deutsch-Ostasiatischer Klub* in Berlin (February 2, 1927) are other notable examples of increased German interest in China.⁵² Chinese seminars

⁵⁰PA, Abt. IV, Po 12 Chi: Pressewesen, I-VII, *passim*, (esp. AA to rep. in Peking, no No. (VII Chi 353), May 25, 1920).

⁵¹Schrecker, 243.

⁵²PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft; Wirtschaft 6, I, Memo, no No., n.d. [October, 1928]. For a listing of more Sino-German cultural associations, see Drechsler, 16-17.

and institutes were established at the Universities of Berlin, Leipzig, Munich, and Hamburg.⁵³

Notwithstanding Germany's efforts in the educational and cultural fields (which compared to the American were slight indeed),⁵⁴ there is no doubt that the close Sino-German relations of the 1930's stemmed chiefly from Germany's military reputation and influence. After the coming of the advisory staff and the beginning of *Reichswehrministerium* interest in China, this trend accelerated. Even previous to this however, after the success of the Nationalists, Chinese officers were accepted for attendance of German army schools or were seconded to the *Reichswehr*. Underlying the extensive German involvement in China's armaments industry during the 1930's and the barter agreements after the *Machtergreifung* was the fact that in Nanking military elements predominated, and many of these individuals were influenced by German military thought and practice.

During the "Nanking Decade" from 1928 to 1937, there was large scale participation of foreigners in the task of modernizing and reconstructing China. Although Germany was chiefly involved in the military sphere, some German nationals, although far fewer and less influential than their counterparts from other countries, notably America, were engaged in civilian reform.⁵⁵ These men attempted to stir the interest of German government and industry in closer cultural relations

⁵³ Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 140.

⁵⁴ According to Thomson, 38, in 1934-1935, American missionary activity alone supported thirteen Christian colleges and universities in China with 6,475 students, and 260 Christian middle schools with an enrollment of 50,000 students.

⁵⁵ For American efforts, see Thomson, *passim*. For the participation of League of Nation officials and experts in China's reconstruction, see Walters, 331-34.

with China. One, a previous *Ministerialrat* in the Prussian Ministry of Finance, Dr. Ing. H. Schubart, was hired by Bauer in 1929 and acted from that year until 1931 as an advisor in architectural matters (*Bauwesen*) to the Nanking government. Upon his return to Germany, he endeavored to increase German government and industrial involvement in China's reconstruction, arguing that China's future development had too much potential to be lost by default to other foreign powers. Germany had to accept the challenge and enter into competition with other western countries to win influence in China. The competition had to be fought mainly at the cultural level, by the dissemination of Germany's "superior" intellectual, scientific, and cultural attributes, and on a far larger scale than had been attempted heretofore. The major spheres which Schubart recommended for German concentration were those of education, advisory activity, and intergovernmental cooperation. In this way, China's friendship could be secured, and benefits would accrue to German commerce and industry.⁵⁶ In these recommendations one also can see the influence of the preconceptions common to Bauer and the radical-right, of Germany's historic role in combatting the penetration of "western materialism" into the ancient culture of China.

Another civilian advisor, Herr Ulderup, was employed in 1929 by the Nanking Ministry of Transportation as an advisor for the development of a Chinese merchant marine (virtually the entire river, coastal, and overseas carrying trade of China was in foreign hands).⁵⁷ He had been

⁵⁶PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft: Wirtschaft 6, II, Memo Schubart (IV W 10636), December 11, 1933.

⁵⁷See T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, Chapter XIII, "Mercantile Marine," 248-64.

proposed for the position by the *Verband Deutscher Reeder* after a request from Chinese authorities. Not surprisingly, his scheme to develop China's merchant marine capacity involved large-scale participation of German shipping interests. For a period of five years, after which time the Chinese would take over the enterprise, the German companies were to provide a number of ships at their own expense to the "Chinese Navigation Company." The result would be, hopefully, the restoration of the coastal and river navigation to China, and perhaps ultimately development of an overseas merchant marine capacity; the benefits for Germany would be intimate involvement in China's drive to regain control of her water communications, a desire that was closely connected with her aspirations to independence and sovereignty.⁵⁸ The scheme found support both in German shipping circles and in the Foreign Ministry,⁵⁹ but apparently financial and other difficulties prevented its realization.⁶⁰

Early in 1931, Nanking requested the Foreign Ministry to propose a specialist for internal administrative reform of the Chinese government.⁶¹

⁵⁸PA, RM, 37 Chi, III, Memo Trautmann (e.o. IV Chi 3209), November 22, 1929; T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 248-64.

⁵⁹After a conversation with Ulderup on December 7, 1929, Foreign Minister Curtius was much impressed with the scheme and promised Foreign Ministry support. PA, RM, 37 Chi, III, Memo Curtius, December 12, 1929. In view of the fact that Nanking was directly challenging the extra-territoriality prerogatives of the Western Powers in this matter, this promise of support demonstrates that Curtius had little understanding of China's international position in the Far East.

⁶⁰Following a major \$30,000,000 loan scandal in 1931, the Nanking government bought up sole ownership of the "China Merchants' Steam Navigation Company," and entered into a program of reform and expansion. After negotiations with the western powers in the early 1930's and with British assistance after 1934 the reorganization of China's carrying trade began. See T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 252-57.

⁶¹BA, *Nachlass Wolfgang Jaenicke*, No. 58, Memo Michelsen (IV Chi 58), January 14, 1931; T-120/5620/L1525/L460374, "Wochenbericht der Abt. IV China," January 11-17, 1931.

This resulted in one German national, at least, being employed in the higher reaches of China's civilian hierarchy. The post was accepted by Wolfgang Jaenicke, a man of liberal tendencies, who would serve Chiang Kai-shek's government until 1935. Jaenicke had extensive experience in German local government, having served until 1930 first as *Regierungspräsident* at Breslau and then at Potsdam.⁶² During his years in China, he made many suggestions for internal administrative reform, strengthening of the Chinese civil service, and altering of the provincial-federal relationship.⁶³ But as a result of Nanking's preoccupation with internal and external military threats (and communism) from 1931 on, it is likely that Jaenicke's reform suggestions were never implemented.

The German Foreign Ministry's interest in promoting trade and commerce between Germany and China was evident particularly in the infant field of aviation. During the 1920's commercial aviation on an international scale was developed rapidly. Many countries established air connections with their colonies throughout the world, but since this was impossible for Germany she turned to Latin America and Asia to develop her aviation ambitions. For China's part, although as early as 1919 elaborate schemes had been developed in conjunction with the British for the establishment of internal air communications, the warlord period prevented the realization of civilian air transport.⁶⁴

For Germany the whole question of aviation was intimately linked

⁶²After 1945, Jaenicke served as Bavarian *Staatssekretär für Flüchtlingswesen* and later became Bonn's Ambassador to Pakistan.

⁶³For details, see *ibid.*, *passim*.

⁶⁴T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 237. See also DBFP, *First Series*, XIV, *passim*, esp. Doc. No. 128, for information on Chang Tso-lin's seizure of large number of Vickers' aircraft from the Peking government as "booty." See Louis, 120ff., for British policy with regard to aircraft sales to Chinese warlords.

with the disarmament provisions of Versailles. Both military and civilian aviation had been placed under severe restrictions, highlighted by an outright prohibition of the former and a temporary ban on the manufacture or importing of aircraft for the latter. Responsibility for the enforcement of these restrictions was in the hands of the Inter-Allied Aviation Control Commission.⁶⁵ As in other areas involving military restrictions, clandestine measures designed to circumvent them were begun immediately by the military and naval authorities in Germany. Likewise, individual German firms established branch factories abroad in order to continue production and development - Junkers in Sweden, Rohrbach in the Netherlands, and Dornier in Switzerland. After May 5, 1922 restrictions on the construction of civilian aircraft in Germany were lightened, although limitations were still placed on their speed, altitude, range, and load capacity. On January 1, 1923 the limitations on air sovereignty in Germany with regard to over-flights and landings were abolished opening the way to a renewal of activity in the German aviation industry.

It was in 1923 that the first contacts between German military authorities and the German aviation industry occurred, contacts that ultimately led to close cooperation between German private aviation companies, the *Reichswehr* (and *Marine*), and the Transportation Ministry. During these years also a rationalization program took place in the German aircraft industry, with most of the more important firms amalgamating into the *Aero-Lloyd* consortium. Competition between this group and the other major aviation firm, *Junkers-Luftverkehr*, was ended under Ministry of Transportation auspices when the two concerns agreed to cooperate in the

⁶⁵ Völker, *Luftfahrt*, 125. (The remainder of this paragraph and the next are based on *ibid.*, *passim.*)

Deutsche Lufthansa corporation founded on January 6, 1926. A few months later the signing of the Paris Air Transport Treaty on May 21, 1926 lifted all remaining restrictions on German construction of aircraft for civilian purposes.

In that year, *Lufthansa* considered the possibility of initiating a regular run from Germany to East Asia. In order to demonstrate the practical feasibility of flying from Berlin to Peking, two Junkers aircraft made the trip, following a route which passed through Königsberg and Moscow, along the trans-Siberian railroad to Irkutsk, and thence to Harbin and Peking.⁶⁶ The German Foreign Ministry showed interest in this project as well as in the plans of various German firms to develop an internal Chinese air network. The first scheme would provide rapid communication between Germany and the Far East, thereby aiding German commercial interests; the second hopefully would work to the advantage of Germany's aircraft industry and lead to substantial export sales to China.

However, China's internal disturbances prevented practical results for the time being. Even after the success of the Nationalists in Nanking in 1928 had brought a temporary respite for China, the realization of an air route across Russia remained improbable: the Nationalists and the Soviet Union had severed consular and other relations in 1927, and with the ascendancy of Chiang Kai-shek in Kuomintang councils, the unfriendly relations between the two governments did not end for some time.

While German aviation was not successful in inaugurating a commercial aviation service in China until late in the decade, it is not surprising that sale of aircraft for military purposes found a ready market. Although,

⁶⁶ Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 184-87.

as has been shown, construction of aircraft for civilian use within certain limitations was legal in Germany after 1922, and the Wilhelmstrasse supported an export drive in this field, it "opposed" the sale of aircraft to Chinese warlords as long as the Arms Embargo remained in effect. In 1925, for example, Junkers had concluded a contract with Marshal Feng Yü-hsiang for the delivery of some twenty aircraft. The Foreign Ministry momentarily took alarm that this sale might violate the 1919 Arms Embargo and lead to complications with Britain. There was no doubt in the Wilhelmstrasse that Feng intended to turn the aircraft to military purposes. However, even though the Wilhelmstrasse expressed its apprehension to other Ministries, the aircraft were delivered: the Foreign Ministry itself finally concluded that it did not have the legal means or influence to prevent the shipment.⁶⁷

In 1928, the marketing of aircraft in China increased, reflecting not only the beginnings of Bauer's work with the Nanking government, but also the concerted efforts of the German aviation companies, with Junkers in the lead, to penetrate the Chinese market.⁶⁸ During this year a confused situation existed with regard to the German aviation industry's drive for the China market, with various agents - Bauer, Kaumann, and

⁶⁷PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien, I, Boyé to AA, No. 2434 (II F 3184), Anlage 1 (Consulate-General Tientsin (Betz) to Legation Peking, J. No. 2235, August 24, 1925), August 27, 1925; Note Schultz-Sponholz (zu II F 3184), September 26, 1925.

⁶⁸Junkers prime purpose in cooperating with *Lufthansa* always had been to develop a market for the sale of its aircraft and engines, a fact that caused some difficulties in its relationship with the Ministry of Transportation and the *Reichswehr*. See Völker, *Luftfahrt*, 153ff. Presumably it was this same tendency which, with regard to the China market, led to its non-participation in the combine formed in 1930 (see *infra*), and permitted its clandestine relationship with Bauer.

Haensel⁶⁹ - competing with one another and *Lufthansa* opening discussions with the Nanking government for air route concessions.

In 1928-1929, the German aviation industry had high hopes that it could win the potentially rich China market away from its foreign competitors. After the success of the Nationalists, the creation of an internal Chinese air transportation network was a likelihood; China had very poor communications and an air network in the hands of Nanking would increase the central government's control over the vast spaces of China. It was with these views in mind, that *Lufthansa* approached the Nationalist government.⁷⁰ Its hopes however were temporarily dashed in April 1929, when a contract was signed between the Chinese Minister of Railroads, Sun Fo, and the Aviation Exploration Company (a subsidiary of the American Curtis group) setting up the Chinese National Aviation Corporation to provide internal air communication for China.⁷¹

This was a real blow to Germany's export ambitions in China. The German Minister in Peking, Borch, pointed out that the German aircraft industry was too weak financially to compete with its American and French (and he could have mentioned, Italian) competitors. The latter were in a position to grant long-term credits and provide immediate capital investments. He recommended that the German government give support to

⁶⁹See *supra*, 249-50.

⁷⁰T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 238.

⁷¹PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien, III, Memo (II F 1840), n.d. [April, 1929]. T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 237, gives the date of establishment as July, 1930. Actually, the National Aviation Corporation had been founded in 1929 and serviced the route Shanghai-Nanking; at the same time the American (Curtis) "China Airways" handled the Shanghai-Hankow route. Presumably, the agreement between the Americans and Nanking was only made public in 1930, but the Wilhelmstrasse learned of it the previous year.

the aircraft industry's export aspirations in China, and that it should form a combine to operate in that market.⁷²

The result was the formation in July 1930 of the "*Export-Gemeinschaft für China*," an association to increase German competitiveness in China made up of all German aircraft firms, with the exception of Junkers.⁷³ The German Ministry of Transportation gave full support to the efforts of the combine (presumably including subsidies and later certainly recommending export-credit guarantees), and the Foreign Ministry also did all in its sphere to aid the export drive.

No direct information is available, but circumstances lead to the suspicion that the German government's penetration of the China aviation market heightened the interest of the *Reichswehr* in that country and the advisory staff. The Ministry of Transportation and the military aviation authorities had been in closest coordination since 1923, and the *Reichswehr*

⁷²PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien, III, Borch to AA, No. 4187 (IV Chi 302), December 31, 1929; Borch to AA (II F 1965), June 1, 1930.

⁷³*Ibid.*, RVM to AA, L.7.7109 (II F 2678), July 21, 1930. The firms represented were: "Arado" Handelsgesellschaft, Bayerische Flugzeugwerke, Bayerische-Motoren-Werke, Dornier Metallbauten, Focke-Wulfe Flugzeugbau, Ernst Heinkel Flugzeugwerke, and Siemens und Halske Flugmotorenwerke. German export prospects in aircraft recently had received a setback in south China. August Haensel (whom the Wilhelmstrasse suspected was in the employ of the Transportation Ministry [see Chapter VII, 249, n. 50, *supra*]), was employed in 1930 as an air advisor to Liu Hsiang's Twenty-first Army, and, along with a Junkers representative, was negotiating for the sale of German aircraft. In March 1930, the Chinese had insisted upon a bombing demonstration and Haensel had let a bomb slip from his grasp when passing over the airfield which was "thick with soldiers." The result was three dead, two hospitalized, and 105 lightly wounded. Haensel was tried and sentenced to imprisonment, but released on condition that he leave China. The French took over the aircraft business in Chungking. *Ibid.*, Borch to AA, No. 1135 (II F 1304), April 2, 1930; Borch to AA, No. 1450 (II F 1846), May 8, 1930.

always was interested in supporting German armament or aviation production by enlarging export markets. The activities of Bauer⁷⁴ (and Junkers) certainly could not have been looked on with favor by the Bendlerstrasse.⁷⁵ Further, it was at the end of this year (November 1930) that agreement was reached between Defense Minister Groener, Foreign Minister Curtius, Transportation Minister von Guérard, and General Hilmar von Mittelberger (*Inspektion der Waffenschulen und der Luftwaffe, RWM*) that a secret stockpile of aircraft should be built up in Germany,⁷⁶ an agreement that indicated the necessity of finding an export market for the German aviation industry. Perhaps it was this interest that lay behind the employment by Nanking of General Wetzell in the spring of 1930, the introduction of an increased number of aviation advisors in the advisory group, and *Reichswehr* support for Chiang Kai-shek's German military advisory group.

In the matter of developing air communications between Europe and the Far East via Central Asia, negotiations between *Lufthansa* and the Chinese Ministry of Communications⁷⁷ continued throughout 1929 to mid-1930 for the establishment of a direct connection between Berlin and Nanking.⁷⁸

⁷⁴Not only his introduction of the centralized purchasing system in Berlin obligated German authorities to solicit influence in Nanking, but it should be recalled that he recommended to Nanking to break off negotiations with *Lufthansa*. See *supra*, 250, 54.

⁷⁵The *Reichswehr* relied mainly on Heinkel, Arado, and Dornier for development of new aircraft. Junkers all-metal fighters and other aircraft were found to be unsuitable and "always too expensive." See Völker *Luftfahrt*, 181. It should also be mentioned once again that Wetzell's contact in Berlin was Colonel Brinkmann of the Arado aircraft firm.

⁷⁶*Ibid.*, 159. On Mittelberger's fact-finding mission in 1926 to assess the cooperation with the Soviet Union, see Erickson, 261-62.

⁷⁷The Curtis Agreement had been signed by Sun Fo of the Ministry of Railroads; the Ministry of Communication was under the influence of Finance Minister T.V. Soong.

⁷⁸PA, Abt. II Luft, *Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, III, Memo Schultz-Sponholz (e.o. II F 3975), November 22, 1929.

In August 1930, agreement was reached⁷⁹ and the Eurasia Aviation Corporation was set up to develop air transportation within China and with Europe. Nanking had a two-thirds controlling interest in the corporation, the remainder being in German hands. Although agreement could not be reached for financial reasons between Germany and Russia for the Moscow-Chinese border leg of the route,⁸⁰ and direct air service between Germany and China never materialized, the company began air service within China in the summer of 1931 with the establishment of a Shanghai-Manchuli flight,⁸¹ a route which was however cut a few months later by the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. The Eurasia Corporation was a welcome boost to the German aircraft export business, buying planes,⁸² technical equipment, and providing a German foothold in China for further development of air communication and telecommunications.⁸³

Despite the Wilhelmstrasse's desire to support German penetration of the Chinese aviation market, it was not willing to accept the speculative scheme put forward in 1930 by the Berlin firm of Steffen & Heymann. This proposal, the so-called "Nanking Project," had originated

⁷⁹A Sino-German air mail contract had been signed on February 21, 1930. T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 238. The Eurasia Corporation came into being in January 1931 (the year "1934" in *ibid.*, is an obvious misprint).

⁸⁰PA, *Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, IV, AA circular (II F 4441), January 6, 1931. A line had been in operation between Berlin and Moscow for eight years.

⁸¹T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 242.

⁸²See *ibid.*, 243-44, for details of Chinese aviation purchases from Germany (mainly Junkers) after 1934.

⁸³See *ibid.*, 280-87, and Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 187-92, for China's post-1930 development of telecommunications; particularly the former, 286, for the role of Telefunken in constructing Asia's then largest broadcasting station in 1932 for the "Publicity Department" of the Kuomintang.

with a visit to Germany of Gustav Amann, once advisor to Sun Yat-sen and now, in 1930, an agent of Finance Minister Soong. He engaged Steffen & Heymann to construct a central airport at Nanking, with auxiliary repair shops and industrial enterprises.⁸⁴ Ultimately, the cost was calculated at some G. \$20,000,000.

The Foreign Ministry was leary of the scheme. Not only was the project a personal enterprise of T. V. Soong and not backed officially by the Nanking government but Steffen & Heymann were unable to proceed without a German government credit-guarantee. Furthermore, during the same year, the involvement of the firm in the sale of poison-gas abroad had caused the Wilhelmstrasse much concern, particularly with regard to the rumors in the press involving sale of such products to China. Even more disturbing to the Foreign Ministry was the fact that a chemical complex was foreseen in the Nanking project, chemical factories which undoubtedly would be used for the manufacture of poison-gas and explosives.⁸⁵ After extensive negotiations between various agencies of the German government on the one hand and Steffen & Heymann on the other,⁸⁶ the project fell through partially as a result of the Foreign Ministry's adamant opposition

⁸⁴ Apparently Amann first got in contact with Herr Steffen in the autumn of 1929, his attention having been drawn to the firm's (unsuccessful) project worked out for the Turkish government - "Project Anatolia." Although Hans Steffen signed himself "*Major a.D. der Fliegertruppe*," I have been unable to find any evidence linking him at this time to the *Reichswehr*. See esp., Völker, *Luftfahrt*; and *idem*, *Die Deutsche Luftwaffe*.

⁸⁵ For the Wilhelmstrasse's concern with the armament side of Steffen & Heymann's activities, see *supra*, 292-94.

⁸⁶ For details on the Steffen & Heymann project, see esp., PA, *Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, IV, Steffen & Heymann to AA, *Anlage* (T. V. Soong to Steffen, September 2, 1930), September 29, 1930; AA to Steffen (IV Chi 2134), September 30, 1930; Steffen to AA, October 9, 1930; Memo Bülow, November 4, 1930; Memo (e.o. IV Chi 192) [re *Ressort* discussion], January 31, 1931; RM, 37 Chi, III, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 205), February 2, 1931; BA, R2/16675.

to any arms sales during this year of civil war.⁸⁷ The potential dangers for Germany's neutral policy in China far outweighed any benefits that might accrue to Germany's aviation industry and export trade.⁸⁸

After the success of the Nationalists in 1928, German industrial circles looked with increased interest at China. The possibility that internal order would be restored opened up the possibility of German participation in the reconstruction of China. As a matter of fact, Sun Fo, former Nationalist Minister of Finance, proposed just this when he visited Berlin in the summer of 1928.⁸⁹ He discussed the possibility of intimate German cooperation in China's industrial development with German industrial circles and with officials of the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Economics, and the Ministry of Finance. He also brought up the subject in a discussion with Chancellor Müller on July 12, 1928.⁹⁰

⁸⁷The major objection of the German government lay in the financial weakness of the firm and the lack of any concrete promises from T.V. Soong (much less from the Nanking government). If Steffen's firm could have met certain preconditions (elimination of the chemical factories from the scheme, a contract with Nanking, sufficient bank backing, limiting of the project to 8 million dollars, and a maximum eight year credit period), the German government would have considered limited participation in the form of a credit-guarantee. See *PA, RM, 37 Chi*, III, Memo (e.o. IV Chi 205), February 2, 1931. It is interesting that Steffen & Heymann's lobbyist in Berlin, the ex-leader of the Democratic Party, Erich Koch-Weser, argued that since the German government would not fully back to project, it had been necessary to turn to a French consortium for partial backing. Was this a case of using nationalistic appeals for personal gain? See *PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, IV, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 192), January 31, 1931.

⁸⁸For further schemes of aviation development in China by German firms, notably Junkers and Otto Wolff, after 1933, see *PA, Abt. II Luft, Luftverkehr: Ostasien*, IV-VI, *passim*; T'ang Leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 242-47; and Weinberg, 126, and citations, n. 26.

⁸⁹See *supra*, 90-91.

⁹⁰*PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, V, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 1380), July 12, 1928; *BA, R 43I/56*, Dirksen to *Reichskanzlei*, RK 5449 (IV Chi 1355), July 10, 1928.

According to Sun Fo, the Nationalist government, having attained control of the country, now were prepared to initiate Sun Yat-sen's schemes of the early 1920's. Railways were to be constructed, highways built, harbors dug, and so on. Further, China had to develop key industries if she ever hoped to be an independent industrial power. In all of this, German technical assistance and industrial know-how would be welcome. If financial assistance and investment could be offered, China would gladly welcome them.

The Wilhelmstrasse reacted with caution: it was not sure whether Sun Fo was speaking for himself or for the Nationalist government. Furthermore, Berlin was then not prepared to take any step which might indicate favor for Nanking before the Treaty Powers did so. Nevertheless, it was willing to second a proposal made by Sun Fo that a commission of private German trade experts go to China to investigate at first hand economic conditions and possible areas of endeavor for German industry.

Sun Fo's suggestion apparently also struck a responsive chord with the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie*, and, after the formal establishment of relations between Berlin and Nanking (and the consolidation of the military advisory group's status in Nanking), a Study Commission sailed for China in February 1930.⁹¹ However, the Commission visited not only the territory controlled by the Nationalists but, in deference to the Wilhelmstrasse's concern for maintaining German neutrality in the continuing domestic strife in China, also the areas under the control of autonomous or semi-independent governments.⁹² Long conferences were

⁹¹ Discussion of the Commission's activities is based upon reports scattered through many different Foreign Ministry files, and Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 173-84.

⁹² See *supra*, 282.

held with key figures in the Ministries of Nanking, and inspections tours were taken to important economic regions.⁹³ The Commission returned to Germany in June 1930, and published a report of its findings and recommendations.⁹⁴

The findings of the Commission were somewhat optimistic about a return of peaceful conditions after the defeat of the Northern Coalition in the autumn of 1930. If internal order could be secured in China, a great potential for German industrial activity was foreseen: China had the natural resources necessary for the development of an industrial complex. German technical assistance would remedy the defects of an inadequate transportation network and a scarcity of trained technical personnel. All in all, good prospects for German trade and commerce were foreseen.

In order to further German interests in China, members of the Commission also recommended an increased German cultural effort. At a meeting of the China Committee of the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* on November 28, 1930, M. Th. Strewe, the propagandist for Sino-German industrial cooperation since the early 1920's and an editor of the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, argued that more funds had to be allocated to support German educational enterprises in China. He proposed that Germany establish libraries in key centers and attempt to place German nationals in teaching positions in China. Also, more Chinese students should be induced to come to Germany to study. Cultural

⁹³A side trip was taken to major Manchurian centers - the area later of prime interest to German importers (soybeans).

⁹⁴*Bericht der China-Studienkommission des Reichsverbandes der Deutschen Industrie* (Leipzig, 1930). A copy may be found in PA, Abt. IV Wirtschaft, Wirtschaft 1A: Beteiligung, III.

influence meant increased trade.⁹⁵

The heightened interest of German industrial circles in China was demonstrated by the appearance of many articles on the possibility of Sino-German collaboration during 1930-1931,⁹⁶ and the establishment in January 1931 by the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie* (to carry on the work of the China Study Commission) of the *China-Studien-Gesellschaft*. This became the main organ of private Sino-German economic cooperation during the next decade.

The increased interest of German industrialists in China unfortunately coincided with the Depression. Germany herself had little capital to invest, and the projects required by China - factories, water and electrical works, railroads, bridges, harbors, canals, etc. - required long-term credits. Nevertheless the German government did make an effort to assist German capitalists to invest in China's reconstruction. In German government circles, means were discussed whereby the government could guarantee the credit-export business,⁹⁷ and eventually such a policy was adopted leading to a substantial degree of German participation in China's economic development during the 1930's.⁹⁸ However post-1930 Sino-German economic involvement was

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, "Bericht des Chinaausschuss, Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie," December 10, 1930. (Michelsen, Lautenschlager, and Freudenberg of the East Asia desk of the Foreign Ministry attended this meeting.)

⁹⁶Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 180-82.

⁹⁷PA, *Direktoren-Handakten, Handakten Trautmann, China*, Memo ("Reichsausfallgarantien zu Förderungen deutscher Industrielieferungen nach China") (e.o. IV Chi 300), February 19, 1931.

⁹⁸For details, see the files of the *Reichsfinanzministerium* now deposited at the *Bundesarchiv*, Koblenz. T'ang leang-li, ed., *Reconstruction in China*, 60-67, and Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 189ff., underestimate (the former purposely) the degree of German involvement in China's economic development of the 1930's.

concentrated mainly in barter deals for raw materials and armaments, or various schemes arising out of the projects of enterprising individuals.⁹⁹ For one thing, China after the Japanese invasion increasingly devoted her attention to national defence, and placed economic development in a secondary priority.¹⁰⁰

The policy pursued by the Wilhelmstrasse during the 1920's which aimed at enlarging Sino-German trade and commerce must be judged a success. Sino-German trade showed a steady increase until economic factors briefly intervened after 1929, a slump however that was overcome so that by 1936 Germany held first place among European nations in China's foreign trade. The Foreign Ministry's policy of maintaining a "low profile" in China and of cultivating the "friendship" of the Chinese had prepared the way for the extensive Sino-German military and economic cooperation during the 1930's. And, in 1931, except for external events that were beyond the control of the Foreign Ministry or any other German government body, there seemed to be every reason to expect that economic cooperation in the future between the two countries would increase and be mutually beneficial.

⁹⁹ See Bloch, *passim*; Mehner, *passim*; and Weinberg, 120-32.

¹⁰⁰ Between 1932 and 1936, Nanking devoted 45 per cent of the annual budget to National Defense. Thomson, 16.

CONCLUSION

German foreign policy toward China after 1919 was based upon a realistic assessment of the predicament facing Germany in the postwar world. World War I had resulted in major power shifts in both Europe and the Far East. In the latter region, the war and the Versailles settlement had excluded Germany from any chance of pursuing a positive political role in the foreseeable future, and left a strong hostility on the part of the victorious powers to her reappearance in the region in any capacity. Thus German foreign policy makers were obliged to make a "virtue out of necessity"¹ and to renounce any further active policy in the Far East. A *sine qua non* of German readmission to the region even as a trading nation was to avoid offending any of the various powers or forces then actively engaged in redefining the structure of Far Eastern international relations.

It is of course commonplace to observe that revision of the Treaty of Versailles was the general aim of German foreign policy after 1919, but it must be emphasized that German "revisionism" did not extend to recovery of her lost prewar territorial or legal privileges in China. The focal point of German policy was in Europe; it was only in this sphere that German could regain the freedom of action commensurate with a sovereign state. Her policy then was directed at removing the

¹This phrase is used by Gordon Craig in connection with the circumscribed nature of German diplomacy after World War I in the European context. See Gordon A. Craig, *From Bismarck to Adenauer: Aspects of German Statescraft* (rev. ed.; New York, 1965), 43.

burdensome and humiliating restrictions on her sovereignty which would once again allow Germany to play the role of a Great Power. To this end China policy always was secondary and subordinate; the wider aim of German revisionism took precedence.

The question may occur as to why Germany was not tempted to cultivate the radical revisionist forces in the Far East - Chinese nationalism and Soviet "anti-imperialism" - in order to advance her own revisionist aspirations in Europe. The reasons are many and varied, but fundamentally they lie in the general fact that these forces in the early 1920's were relatively ineffective vis-à-vis the western powers with whom correct relations were essential for Germany in order to realize her goals at home. Further, during this decade, Far Eastern international relations operated within a framework essentially separate² from that in which European relations were conducted, and a framework from which Germany was excluded.

The latter point needs elaboration. In the Far East as in Europe, World War I was a watershed in the conduct of international relations. The conflict had given birth or impetus to forces which ultimately would make a European-centered framework anachronistic.³

²Iriye, 302, observes that "nations dealt with each event as it arose, without relating it to other problems or examining it as part of a general foreign policy." Germany, of course, not being part of the framework he is referring to, is an exception to this conclusion.

³For elaboration of this theme, and the genesis of the forces for change in the Far East after World War I, see Geoffrey Barraclough, *An Introduction to Contemporary History* (rev. ed.; London, 1967), 93-123, and 153-98. See also his article, "Europe and the Wider World in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in A. O. Sarkissian, ed., *Studies in Diplomatic History and Historiography in honour of G. P. Gooch* (London, 1961), 364-82.

These forces - Chinese nationalism,⁴ Soviet "anti-imperialism,"⁵ and American idealism - were fundamentally hostile to the old methods of diplomatic intercourse - the "diplomacy of imperialism." But beyond this negative conjunction, as the decade progressed, these revisionist forces found themselves to be irreconcilably in opposition to one another, and all efforts during this decade to radically alter the framework of Far Eastern politics ultimately proved barren.

Germany did not take any part in the attempts to restructure Far Eastern politics, and her official policy makers were basically disinterested except in-so-far as involvement would aid revisionist efforts at home by bolstering Germany's international prestige and burnishing her tarnished image. It is in this sense that the projected adherence to the Nine-Power Treaty in 1925-1926 should be viewed. In this matter Germany was not attempting to side with either the West (except perhaps in-so-far as Russia was concerned) or China in the Far East. It was thought in Berlin that the new structure taking shape was not inimicable to China's aspirations to restore her own sovereignty, an error in Berlin not of malevolence but of underestimating the degree of China's growing objection to any ordering of her affairs by international agreement.

Germany's isolated diplomatic position in the Far East, then, was responsible for her decision to cultivate cordial bilateral relations

⁴See Chow Tse-tsung, *passim*; and the recent essay by Jerome B. Grieder, "Communism, Nationalism, and Democracy: The Chinese Intelligentsia and the Chinese Revolution in the 1920's and 1930's," in James B. Crowley, *Modern East Asia: Essays in Interpretation* (New York, 1970), 207-34.

⁵I am well aware that this is often indistinguishable from Russian imperialism, a dualism already manifesting itself in Asia with the disputes over Outer Mongolia and the Chinese Eastern Railway.

with China,⁶ a decision which found expression in Germany's willingness to relinquish her pre-war rights as an extraterritorial power. It is of course correct that Germany had little choice in the matter, but the rationalizations in Berlin - that the days of special rights and spheres of influence were numbered, and that Germany's plight foreshadowed like treatment for the other western powers - showed a recognition of the changes the World War had brought about in the Far East. Thus, a "virtue was made out of necessity," and friendship with China was seen as a device to aid German efforts in trade and commerce and, indirectly, to assist efforts to remove the Versailles restrictions by exhibiting an image of restraint, non-revisionism, and rejection of power-political methods in the Far East.

However, friendship with "China" was a complex policy to pursue because of the disturbed domestic political situation in that country. The confused political situation in Peking as well as the peculiarities of Chinese internal political life often left German policy makers dependent upon the attitude of one or another Chinese politician. Whether or not a particular warlord, politician, or civil servant was "pro German" determined the conditions and timing of many Sino-German agreements or disputes: such was the case with the 1921 Treaty, the 1924 financial agreement, and the 1925-1926 dispute over the Nine-Power adherence, to name only a few examples.⁷ Particularly troublesome were

⁶Cf. the statement in 1921 of the German negotiator in Peking, Consul von Borch: "We must show the Chinese that we have more understanding for their legitimate demands than do other foreign nations." *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A: Vertrag*, II, private letter Borch (Peking) to Knipping (IV Chi 690), January 30, 1921 [arrived April 15, 1921].

⁷See *ibid.*, I-V, *passim*; *Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, I, *passim*; *Abt. IV, Po 4 OA: Konferenz*, I-IV, *passim*.

the succession of regimes in the south of China and the growth of militant Chinese nationalism chiefly embodied in the Kuomintang. The attack on foreign rights in China forced Germany to walk a delicate line for fear of alienating the Treaty Powers, a task complicated by the Soviet-Kuomintang alliance after 1924 which allowed Russia to exert pressure on Berlin in favor of the Chinese Nationalists. Germany's desire to maintain good relations with all factions in China in pursuit of her trading interests meant that a balance had to be maintained between the regional forces, the recognized Peking regime, and the Treaty Powers, a problem that the German government managed to handle with admirable skill.

The main political goal with regard to China policy, though, was to maintain a correct and non-offensive policy toward the Treaty Powers, quasi an extension of the "fulfillment" policy to the Far Eastern sphere. This was especially true in regard to Great Britain, the power to which Germany had to look if revision of Versailles in Europe was to be attained.⁸ This prerequisite meant that Germany - a revisionist power - had to foreswear adventurist policies in support of the truly revisionist forces in Asia - Chinese nationalism and Soviet "anti-imperialism." This fact explains the coolness with which the German government received Sun Yat-sen's requests for assistance in the early 1920's,⁹ its neutral policy toward the Chinese Civil War, its

⁸Holborn, "Diplomats and Diplomacy," in Craig and Gilbert, *The Diplomats*, I, 159-60.

⁹Of course the tenuous nature and weakness of Sun's regime also must have played a role, but the Wilhelmstrasse did consider it significant enough to extend limited assistance in such innocuous matters as the printing of banknotes and strove to maintain cordial relations.

continuing opposition to German ex-officers entering the service of the Nationalists, and its decision not to recognize the Nanking government until after the United States had taken the first step. Even after the Nationalists had attained international recognition, the Wilhelmstrasse still looked with official disfavor on collaboration initiated by the *Reichswehr* in spheres that could lead to complications with one or another of the Treaty Powers.

It is clear then that Germany pursued an essentially cautious policy toward China, reflecting a realistic appraisal of the diplomatic situation in the Far East. Every effort was bent to maintain a "low profile" in the Far East in order to further the goal of revising the European Versailles settlement. One impediment to this end was that sometimes the former objective came into conflict with the latter, and when this happened European prerequisites took precedence. An example of such a situation was German policy toward the China arms trade. The Wilhelmstrasse attempted to limit the foreign policy repercussions of the business and to offset the damaging effect caused to Germany's image, a task made difficult by the penchant of the Entente press to suspect Germany of the worst in such matters, not to speak of the popular prejudice during the 1920's regarding the immoral and dangerous nature of the armament business. But the major obstacle to solving the problem lay with Berlin's preoccupation with easing the Versailles disarmament restrictions. Once progress on this matter had been made, the Foreign Ministry demonstrated its good faith to the Treaty Powers and the importance it attached to refurbishing Germany's world image by moving to end the involvement of German nationals in the traffic. To this end,

legal measures were taken, significantly enough over the objections of both the trading interests and the *Reichswehr*.

It was this same concern with Germany's image and the consequences for the "fulfillment" policy that made the involvement of Max Bauer and other German adventurers in China so disturbing to the Wilhelmstrasse. It seems clear that the origins of Bauer's activities in China were in no way linked with any official designs by the German government, but instead followed from the triumph of Chinese nationalism with the establishment of the Nanking regime. Although "geopolitical"¹⁰ and "ideological" factors (i.e., anti-Western values) linked the Chinese Nationalists and the German radical-right and seem to have been of some importance in the inception of the Bauer mission, ironically of more importance was the policy of the German government to remain aloof from any adventuresome endeavors in China. Given the Chinese respect for German military thought and prowess, it is clear that an official military mission would have been welcome (as the repeated requests for

¹⁰ Here I refer to the repeated surfacing since the early 1920's of the idea of a German-Chinese-Russian "bloc" against Western political and economic hegemony. For example, as late as 1931 and significantly after the Kuomintang-Soviet split the proposal again was brought up (although not officially) from the Chinese side. During a visit to Berlin in the autumn of 1931, Chinese Deputy-Foreign Minister Wang Chia-chen (a professional diplomat and former Minister to Belgium) recommended such collaboration in a discussion with *Staatssekretär* von Bülow. Wang was quoted as saying that even though political differences existed between the three countries they had in common the desire to secure their "political and economic independence [from the West]." Together, they could make themselves "economically independent of the rest of the world." Although subsequent inquiries by the Wilhelmstrasse with the Chinese Legation in Berlin revealed that Wang had not been authorized by Nanking to make such a far-reaching proposal, the fact that it was mentioned at all is revealing. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 Chi: China-Deutschland*, VI, Memo Bülow, September 1, 1931; *AA to Legation Peiping, Embassies Moscow and Tokyo*, no No. (*geh.*) (e.o. IV Chi 1870), September 7, 1931.

a change of Berlin's official policy make clear). But since such a policy was not permissible to Germany because of the wider problems of Versailles and the necessity of maintaining friendship with the Entente and Japan, who would have reacted forcefully to an official mission, the Nationalists initially turned to those elements in Germany who were not loath to ignore the wishes of a Republican government.¹¹

The Bauer mission is significant in the long run however because of the interest increased armament trade with China awakened in the *Reichswehr*. The German military had never been reluctant to pursue foreign policy goals of its own, as the history of Russo-German military cooperation in the Weimar period shows. But until after the establishment of the Nanking regime, circumstances in China were not propitious for military cooperation on any scale. Certain requirements that the *Reichswehr* needed for its foreign activities were lacking in China - secrecy, a sufficiently stable political climate which would permit the development of training facilities of a technical nature (aircraft, armor, and gas), and finally a country which was not subject to western control. It was only in the late 1920's, when expanded rearmament brought up the necessity for markets (and China had regained a degree of sovereignty vis-à-vis the Treaty Powers), that the German military initiated the support for the advisory group which led to the subsequent intimate Sino-German relations in armaments deals, barter agreements, and trade and commerce.

¹¹In this connection, it is not unimportant that Britain, to which such a policy was possible, provided Nanking with a naval mission.

The Bauer mission, then, initiated the beginning of the end for the paramount role in shaping and implementing policy towards China which the professional foreign service personnel of the Wilhelmstrasse had played to that point. Even at the outset of the establishment of Sino-German relations after World War I when the old line diplomats generally were in eclipse and an attempt was made to "democratize" the foreign service and keep it amenable to parliamentary control,¹² the role of the professionals was great. The foreign service officers of the old regime proved indispensable in the case of China, mainly because of the relative ignorance of most politicians and non-experts in the face of a complex situation in that part of the world. Although both Foreign Minister Hermann Müller and Defense Minister Gustav Noske were directly involved in the discussions determining future China policy, it may reasonably be surmised that their role was limited to acquiescing in suggestions drawn up in positions papers by the more knowledgeable among their subordinates.¹³ It seems that once Versailles had shown the narrow limits within which German policy in the Far East would have to operate henceforth, and the decision was taken that in the future the the only feasible role for Germany was in trade and maintaining a "low profile," it was left to the professionals of the Foreign Ministry to implement policy. Thus, virtually from the beginning, in the case of China, the influence of Foreign Ministry officials was high.

German policy toward China was shaped by the professionals in close conjunction with the interested trading firms. In discussions, the

¹²Holborn, "Diplomats and Diplomacy," in Craig and Gilbert, *The Diplomats*, I, 148ff; Seabury, 9-16.

¹³See *supra*, 335-36.

prerequisites for German reentry into the China market were hammered out, and a negotiating team consisting of professional foreign service personnel and Herr March of the *OAV* was dispatched to China to try to reach agreement on the terms for reestablishment of Sino-German relations. It seems significant that in the voluminous exchange of telegrams and reports between Berlin and Peking regarding the wording, terms, and financial details of the agreement under negotiation with China,¹⁴ no sign appears that these matters were considered by, sanctioned as to specific alteration in the terms, or even brought to the attention of the political head of the Foreign Ministry. All were decided by communication between Consul von Borch in Peking (who had great leeway in the negotiations) and the head of the East Asia desk, *Ministerialdirektor* Knipping. As far as parliamentary control was concerned, the *Reichstag* was informed of Borch's presence in China only some four months after his arrival.¹⁵ It also will be remembered that Knipping personally took steps to meet the request for German military advisors by one of the more prominent strong-men in Peking, a move that violated both the letter and spirit of the Versailles Treaty and the general policy of the Weimar government. There is no evidence that this step was known to the current Foreign Ministers, Adolf Köster (March-June, 1920) or Walter Simons (June 1920-May 1921). It seems likely that

¹⁴I have of course only cited the more important exchanges and virtually none of the communications with the experts of the *RWM*, *RFM*, or other agencies (see Chapter I, *supra*), but the negotiating team in Peking were in almost daily contact with Berlin after serious negotiations with the Chinese had begun.

¹⁵Borch's team was of course unofficial, but this was a status required by the vagaries of Chinese domestic politics; some German consular officers were even taken over into official Dutch service. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 2 A Chi: Vertrag*, II, Borch to AA (IV Chi 690), January 30, 1921.

Knipping accepted the risk in order to facilitate negotiations with the Peking warlords, but it was nevertheless a bona fide *policy* decision, since it could be interpreted malevolently by the Entente, or even by the Bolsheviks who had interests in Outer Mongolia antithetical to those of the current Japanese-influenced Peking regime.

Whatever the general reasons for the revival of the traditional foreign service after the post-war attempts at "democratization,"¹⁶ insofar as China was concerned one must not underestimate the usefulness of the familiarity with that country acquired in pre-war years by many members of the Wilhelmstrasse's East Asia desk. Similarly, the bureaucrats disposed of a legal expertise which also was of great value in negotiating Germany's future relations with China. Both the Sino-German Treaty of 1921 and the Agreement of June 6/7, 1924 involved lengthy and complicated negotiations. The conclusion of these instruments depended to no small degree on the negotiating skill of the German representatives and their concomitant familiarity with the Chinese mode of personal intercourse. Thus the expertise of the Wilhelmstrasse's personnel served Germany well in this matter, but at the same time acted to limit the influence of the elected representatives in the formulation of Germany's policy toward China.

Moreover, the complex financial and economic nature of the negotiations introduced two further Ministries - Finance and Economics - into the field of foreign policy, further lessening parliamentary control. As far as China was concerned, policy had to be coordinated by the Wilhelmstrasse with these Ministries not only in questions involving the reestablishment of formal relations, but in the problems of recapitalizing the *Deutsch-Asiatische Bank*, relations with the Allied Reparations Commission, and the reimbursement of dispossessed German firms

¹⁶Holborn, "Diplomats and Diplomacy," in Craig and Gilbert, *The Diplomats*, I, 148-54.

and businessmen in China. Likewise, the Wilhelmstrasse was obliged to consult with these Ministries before measures could be adopted to end German participation in the China weapons trade.

In-so-far as German policy toward China is concerned, it confirmed the general rule that higher level policy makers are dependent upon the memoranda and recommendations of the specialists.¹⁷ It may safely be stated that China affairs were esoteric, requiring special knowledge which few politicians in Weimar Germany possessed. China was of little interest to the Foreign Ministers,¹⁸ Chancellors, or other politicians of the Weimar period except when relations with that country conjuncted with other problems stemming from Germany's wider policy aims. Thus, because of the separate nature of Far Eastern international relations and the highly turbulent domestic events in China, the reports of German diplomatic and consular officials were of particular importance. It was upon their recommendations that the Foreign Ministers depended for guidance as to policy. For example, it was Boyé's persistent complaints about the damaging effects of the armament trade to Germany's "low profile" which finally led to political steps at home. Similarly, his failure (because of his embittered feelings about Chinese "treatment") to discern correctly the depth of Chinese dissatisfaction with Germany's adherence to the

¹⁷ See the excellent discussion of the increased influence of foreign offices in the twentieth century as a result of the increased complexity of international relations in Leonidas E. Hill, "The Wilhelmstrasse in the Nazi Era," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 82, No. 4 (1967), 546-70, although his conclusions about the influence of the Wilhelmstrasse in the Nazi period seem a bit strained.

¹⁸ For example, very little directly concerning China can be found in the Stresemann *Nachlass*, or in Curtius' reminiscences. Curtius did play a minor role before he left office in October 1931 with regard to German policy toward the 1931 Manchurian Crisis, opposing German participation in any forthcoming investigating commission. Ironically, in December China requested the Wilhelmstrasse that he serve as Germany's representative on the Lytton Commission. See PA, Abt. IV, Po 3 adh.: *Chin.-jap. Konflikt*, I, Memo Curtius (e.o. IV Chi 2122), September 2, 1931; XII, Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 3253), December 4, 1931.

Washington system was partially responsible for Berlin's erroneous decision to accept the invitation to adhere. Examples of this type could be multiplied easily.

Another reason might be hazarded to explain the predominance of the Wilhelmstrasse in the formulation and implementation of Germany's China policy. Essentially, Chinese affairs did not stir up German domestic politics unless as an adjunct to a larger interest.¹⁹ For example, the attack in the *Reichstag* in March 1926 on Stresemann's policy toward China by KPD Deputies was motivated by Soviet Russian interests in China and the government's apparent swing to the west. Likewise, the objections voiced at the time by right-wing Nationalist spokesmen were directed not so much at the effects the Nine-Power Treaty would have on China's well-being or aspirations to sovereignty as at the entire Locarno policy. Again the same motivations account for the Communists' attack upon Berlin's neutral policy toward the Chinese revolution in 1927;²⁰ the intent was to embarrass the German government with the British on the one hand and the Chinese Nationalists on the other.

The end of the monopoly held by the Wilhelmstrasse professionals on the formulation of China policy arrived with the consolidation of the Nationalist government in late 1927 and the consequent arrival in China of Max Bauer. Although basic German foreign policy continued to be shaped in the Wilhelmstrasse, the new opportunities brought other agencies

¹⁹ Even the colonial interest groups made no demand for restoration of German influence in the lost leased-territory of Kiaochow. See Wolf W. Schmokel, *Dream of Empire: German Colonialism, 1919-1945* (New Haven, 1964).

²⁰ It is interesting that this was one occasion when China affairs were actually discussed in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the *Reichstag*. See *supra*, 85, n. 86.

of the German government, legitimately or otherwise, to take policy decisions regarding China. An example of the former was the search for export markets for aircraft by the Transportation Ministry in which the Foreign Ministry cooperated. The latter is exemplified in the gradually developing interest of the *Reichswehr* in the advisory group initiated by Bauer and carried on by other adventurers, and the increased sales of armaments that flowed from this development, leading to a policy decision over which, because of the domestic political situation in Germany, the professionals of the Foreign Ministry had no control.

During this period also private interest groups developed an increased interest in China, notably the *Reichsverband der Deutschen Industrie*. This, of course, was supported by the Wilhelmstrasse, in fact was the continuation of its policy to enlarge Sino-German trade and commerce. But the Foreign Ministry continued to be hostile to trade which could have detrimental consequences for Germany's larger foreign political interests, for example the Steffen & Heymann enterprise or the increased armament trade. Nevertheless, increased contacts on many levels between Germany and China invariably tended to limit the Foreign Ministry's attempt to monopolize the conduct of Sino-German relations.

Therefore, the Bauer mission marks the point from which the Wilhelmstrasse gradually relinquished its paramount role in formulating policy toward China. Yet it should be emphasized that the mission was not the product of an effective challenge to official policy from the German side; rather the challenge really came from the Chinese side. It was China's (or perhaps more specifically, Chiang Kai-shek's) interests which led to the success of Bauer's endeavors - the centralizing of weapons

purchasing in Berlin and the continued expansion of the German advisory staff. In turn, this awakened an interest in German military and armament circles which was reciprocated in Nanking, inaugurating the extensive Sino-German cooperation of the next decade.

In summation one must allow that German policy toward China between 1919 and 1931 was successfully conceived and implemented. There was no major dispute between Germany and a western power over Chinese affairs, and her tarnished image in the Far East (as well as in Europe) was restored to the point that Heinrich Schnee, the last governor of German East Africa, was selected to serve as one of the five members of the Lytton Commission investigating the Japanese seizure of Manchuria in the autumn of 1931.²¹ Likewise, German policy aiming at the cultivation of Chinese friendship in order to restore and expand trade and commerce was eminently successful. In fact, Germany by 1935 was to become the leading European

²¹Germany initially had put forward Schnee, Seeckt, and Solf as possible representatives (all had expressed a willingness to serve) on the commission. Japan supported Solf's candidature but China formally requested withdrawal of his name. See *PA, Abt. IV, Po 3 adh.: Chin.-jap. Konflikt*, XII, Bülow to Embassy Paris, No. 735 (zu IV Chi 3261), December 5, 1931; Memo Michelsen (e.o. IV Chi 3300), December 7, 1931; XIV, Meyer to Embassy Tokyo, No. 88 (zu IV Chi 3410), December 18, 1931. Schnee's appointment was welcome to China and a disappointment for Japan. Weinberg, 37-38, makes the interesting comment that Schnee personified the "changing tides." He served in the *Reichstag* from 1924 to 1932 in Stresemann's party, the German People's Party (DVP). He concurred in the unanimous report of the Lytton Commission condemning Japanese aggression, thereby "tying the hands" of the German government. After Germany's break with the League in 1933, he reentered the *Reichstag* as a National Socialist Deputy, and heard Hitler five years later repudiate Germany's vote. Perhaps a comment of *Staatssekretär* von Bülow in November 1931 deserves reproduction: "Germany is very interested that the League does not prove to be impotent in this first serious case." *PA, Abt. 3 adh.: Chin.-jap. Konflikt*, VI, Bülow to Embassy Tokyo, No. 61 (zu IV Chi 2783, ang. 1), November 10, 1931.

exporter to China, and in 1936 in export of semi- and fully finished manufactured goods passed all countries, including the United States and Japan.²²

There is a certain irony in fact that Germany, a revisionist nation, achieved her greatest success in China after 1931, when China had reverted to an essentially non-revisionist policy because of the Japanese challenge. Perhaps this simple explanation goes as far as any ideological connections to explain why the German stake in China was abruptly dismantled by Hitler in 1938 when Germany set off on the path of naked and brutal revisionism.

²²Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 395-96.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY PERSONNEL 1919-1931

A. Foreign Ministers

Count Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau	Jan. 1919-June 1919
Hermann Müller (Social Democrat)	June 1919-Mar. 1920
Dr. Adolf Köster (Social Democrat)	Mar. 1920-June 1920
Dr. Walter Simons	June 1920-May 1921
Dr. Friedrich Rosen	May 1921-Oct. 1921
Dr. Josef Wirth (<i>Kommissarisch</i>) (Center)	Oct. 1921-Jan. 1922
Dr. Walter Rathenau (<i>Kommissarisch</i>) (Democrat)	Jan. 1922-June 1922
Dr. Josef Wirth (<i>Kommissarisch</i>) (Center)	June 1922-Nov. 1922
Dr. Friedrich von Rosenberg	Nov. 1922-Aug. 1923
Dr. Gustav Stresemann (<i>Kommissarisch</i>) (German People's Party)	Aug. 1923-Nov. 1923
Dr. Gustav Stresemann	Nov. 1923-Oct. 1929
Dr. Julius Curtius (<i>Kommissarisch</i>) (German People's Party)	Oct. 1929-Nov. 1929
Dr. Julius Curtius	Nov. 1929-Oct. 1931

B. State Secretaries

Edgar Haniel von Haimhausen	Jul. 1919-Dec. 1922
Adolf Boyé (<i>St.S.W. [Wirtschaft]</i>)	Nov. 1919-July 1921
Ernst von Simson (<i>St.S.W.</i>)	Nov. 1921-July 1922
Baron Ago von Maltzan	Dec. 1922-Dec. 1924
Carl von Schubert	Dec. 1924-June 1930
Bernhard W. von Bülow	June 1930-June 1936

C. Heads of East Asia Desk

Abteilung VII (Ostasien)

Hubert Knipping (<i>Ministerialdirektor</i>)	Mar. 1920-Dec. 1921
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Abteilung IV (b) (OA)

Hubert Knipping	Jan. 1922-Mar. 1925
Dr. Oskar Trautmann	July 1925-Aug. 1931

D. Ministers to China

Adolf Boyé	Dec. 1921-Aug. 1928
Herbert von Borch	June 1929-Oct. 1931
Oskar Trautmann	Oct. 1931-

APPENDIX B

BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE INTERNAL ORGANIZATION OF THE WILHELMSTRASSE¹

(POST-1921)

(Personnel Status as of December 1926 is used as an example)

REICHSMINISTER DES AUSWÄRTIGEN

Dr. Stresemann

BÜRO DES REICHSMINISTERS

MA* Stiller, MA Reiner

PROTOKOL

Leiter: VLR** Köster

SONDERREFERAT D (*Deutschland: Innere Politik*)

Ges. R.*** Redhammer

SONDERREFERAT VÖLKERBUND (*Vbd.*)

Leiter: VLR Dr. Bernhard von Bülow

Mitarbeiter: Ges. R. Dr. Poensgen, Ges. R.
Dr. BoltzeKOMMISSAR FÜR WIRTSCHAFTS-VERHANDLUNGEN UND SONDERREFERATE W.
UND W. REF. (*Wirtschaft und Reparationspolitik*)

Ministerialdirektor Dr. Ritter

1. Referat für die Wirtschaftsverhandlungen
Referent: VLR Dr. Eisenlohr

1

ADAP, B, IV, 607-15.

*Ministerialamtman

**Vortragender Legationsrat

***Gesandtschaftsrat

2. *Referat W.: Alle die auswärtige Politik betr.
grundsätzlichen Wirtschafts- und Finanzfragen;
Fragen der deutschen Zollpolitik, der Ein- und
Ausfuhr*

Referent: VLR Dr. Hemmen

- Referat W. Rep.: Reparation und interalliierte
Verschuldung*

Referent: VLR Dr. Simon

ABTEILUNG I (Personalien und Verwaltung)

Abteilungsleiter: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Schnieder

Referent: VLR Dr. Reuter

ABTEILUNG II (West- und Süd-Ost-Europa)

Abteilungsleiter: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Köpke

1. *West-Europa*

*Leiter: VLR Dr. Bernh. Wilh. von Bülow
(zugl. Völkerbund)*

2. *Süd-Ost-Europa*

Leiter: Gesandter Dr. Graf von Zech-Burkersroda

3. *Besetzte Gebiete*

Leiter: VLR von Friedberg

4. *Wirtschaftsfragen*

Leiter: VLR Windel

ABTEILUNG III (Grossbritannien, Amerika, Orient, Schiffahrtssachen, Schuldfragen, koloniale Angelegenheiten)

Abteilungsleiter: Ministerialdirektor de Haas

1. *Grossbritannien und Amerika*

Leiter: Dirigent VLR Dr. Horstmann

2. *Orient*

Leiter: VLR Dr. Freiherr von Richthofen

3. *Schuldfrage*

Leiter: VLR Dr. Stieve

4. *Koloniale Angelegenheiten*

Leiter: Dirigent VLR Brückner

ABTEILUNG IV (*Osteuropa, Skandinavien und Ostasien*)

Abteilungsleiter: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Wallroth

1. *Osteuropa und Skandinavien*

Leiter: Dirigent VLR Dr. v. Dirksen

2. *Ostasien*

Leiter: Dirigent VLR Dr. Trautmann

a) *China*

Referent: Ges.R. Dr. Michelsen

*Mitarbeiter: LS**** Balser*

b) *Japan nebst Mandatsgebieten*

Referent: LS Dr. Kolb

c) *Siam, Französisch-Hinterindien, Straits-Settlements, Philippinen, Niederländisch-Indien sowie ostasiatische Wirtschaftsangelegenheiten*

Referent: Ges.R. Dr. Altenburg

ABTEILUNG V (*Rechtsabteilung*)

Abteilungsleiter: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gaus

ABTEILUNG VI (*Auslandsdeutschtum: Ausländisches Bildungswesen, Allgemeine kulturelle Beziehungen zwischen Deutschland und dem Auslande*)

Abteilungsleiter: Gesandter Freytag

PRESSE-ABTEILUNG (P)

Pressechef der Reichsregierung: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Walter Zechlin

REICHSZENTRALE FÜR HEIMATDIENST

Ministerialrat Dr. Strahl

APPENDIX C

BRIEF CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF POLITICAL EVENTS IN CHINA, 1915-1931

	<u>NORTH CHINA (PEKING)</u>	<u>SOUTH CHINA (CANTON)</u>
1915		
Dec.	President Yüan Shih-k'ai proclaims himself emperor.	
1916		
Mar.	Yüan Shih-k'ai forced to renounce throne.	
May		Proclamation of independence by military leaders of Yunnan, Kwangsi, Kweichow and Kwangtung Provinces. Formation of "Joint Military Affairs Office."
June	Death of Yüan Shih-k'ai. Fragmentation of Peiyang clique into Anfu (Tuan Ch'i-jui) and Chihli (Fêng Kuo-chang) cliques.	
Aug.	President Li Yüan-hung reconvenes 1913 Parliament. Tuan Ch'i-jui becomes Premier.	
1917		
Mar.	Severance of diplomatic relations with Germany.	
May	President Li Yüan-hung dismisses Premier Tuan Ch'i-jui and calls on Anhwei <i>tuchün</i> Chang Hsün for aid.	
June	Parliament dismissed. Reassembles in South.	
July-Aug.	Chang Hsün restores last Manchu emperor. Collapse of restoration attempt, resignation of Li Yüan-hung, Fêng Kuo-chang becomes Pres., Tuan Ch'i-jui Premier	"Special Parliament" elects Sun Yat-sen <i>Generalissimo</i> , T'ang Chi-yao (<i>tuchün</i> of Yunnan) and Lu Jung-t'ing (<i>tuchün</i> of Kwangsi) <i>Generalissimi</i> . Establishment of "Military Government."

1917		
Aug.	Declaration of War on Central Powers	
Sept.		Declaration of War on Central Powers.
1918		
May		"Special Parliament" abolishes office of <i>Generalissimo</i> and institutes "Directorate." Dominance of Lu Jung-t'ing. Sun Yat-sen departs for Shanghai.
July		Sun Yat-sen returns to Canton at invitation of T'ang Chi-yao.
Sept.-	Anfu Parliament replaces	
Oct.	Fêng Kuo-chang with elder statesman Hsü Shih-ch'ang.	
1919		
May	Disappointment over Versailles Treaty. Anti-Japanese movement begins.	
	Between 1919-1922, complex power struggle takes place between the Anfu (Tuan Ch'i-jui), Fengtien (Chang Tso-lin of Manchuria), and Chihli (<i>tuchlin</i> Ts'ao K'un and General Wu P'ei-fu) cliques.	
1920		
April		Split in Canton regime. Sun Yat-sen leaves for Shanghai.
Oct.		Kwangtung militarist Ch'en Chiung-ming drives Kwangsi militarists out of Kwangtung. Sun Yat-sen returns to Canton.
1921		
Jan.		Rump 1913 Parliament reassembles at Canton.
April		Sun Yat-sen elected "President of Chinese Republic."
1922		
June	Wu P'ei-fu expells Hsü Shih-ch'ang from the Presidency. Reinstates	Split between Sun Yat-sen and Ch'en Chiung-ming.

Li Yüan-hung. Restores
1913 Parliament.

Aug.		Sun Yat-sen again flees to Shanghai.
1923		
Jan.		Sun-Joffe Declaration
Jan.- Feb.		Sun Yat-sen expels Ch'en Chiung-ming from Canton.
June	Li Yüan-hung expelled from Presidency by Ts'ao K'un and ("Christian General") Feng Yü-hsiang.	
Oct.	Parliament sells Presidency to Ts'ao K'un.	
1924		
Jan.		The First National Congress of the Kuomintang. Reorganization.
Sept.- Oct.	Warlords force Ts'ao K'un to resign Presidency.	Sun declares war on Wu P'ei-fu Northern Expedition starts.
Nov.	Tuan Ch'i-jui returns as Provisional Chief Executive. Allies with Chang Tso-lin and Feng Yü-hsiang.	Sun Yat-sen leaves for Peking to call for a People's Assembly.
Dec.	Tuan Ch'i-jui announces convening of a "rehabilitation conference".	
1925		
Jan.- Feb.		Sun Yat-sen confers in Peking with Tuan Ch'i-jui.
March		Death of Sun Yat-sen
May		Shanghai Incident
June		Shakee Massacre. Boycott against Great Britain.
July		"Military Government" formally transformed into "National Government."

Nov.- April 1926	War between Chang Tso-lin and Feng Yü-hsiang. Common front of Chang Tso-lin, Wu P'ei-fu and Yen Hsi-shan forms against Feng Yü-hsiang.	
1926 March		"Chung Shan" Incident. Resignation of Wang Ching-wei as "Government Chairman." Strengthening of Chiang Kai-shek's position.
June- July | |		Chiang Kai-shek appointed Commander-in-Chief of "National Revolutionary Army." Northern Expedition resumes.
Nov.		National Government moves to Wuhan.
Dec.	Chang Tso-lin forms coalition of warlords for defence against Nationalists.	
1927 April	Chang Tso-lin raids Russian Legation in Peking.	Chiang Kai-shek effects <i>coup d'état</i> at Shanghai. Rival government forms at Nanking. Wang Ching-wei returns from Europe. Assumes Chairmanship of Central Committee at Wuhan.
May	Yen Hsi-shan joins Nationalist cause.	
June	Chang Tso-lin proclaims himself <i>Generalissimo</i> of all China's military forces.	
July		Break with Third International.
Aug.		Chiang Kai-shek resigns all posts. Leaves China for Japan.
Sept.		Formation of "Special Committee" Government at Nanking. Dominance of Kwangsi and Western Hills cliques.

Oct.		"Iron Division" Commander Chang Fa-k'uei declares war on "Special Committee." Wang Ching-wei makes overtures to Chiang Kai-shek to overthrow the "Special Committee." Li Chi-shen allies himself with Wang Ching-wei at Canton.
Nov.		Wang Ching-wei, Hu Han-min, and T.V. Soong found new regime at Canton. Wang Ching-wei and Li Chi-shen leave for Shanghai for discussions. Chang Fa-k'uei disarms Huang Shao-Hsiung's troops at Canton.
Dec.		Wang Ching-wei relinquishes all his posts and leaves China for France. Chiang Kai-shek reappointed Commander-in-Chief of reconstituted Kuomintang. Diplomatic relations with Russia severed. Communist insurrection at Canton, crushed by Chang Fa-k'uei.
1928		
Mar.-	Feng Yü-hsiang, Yen	Renewal of offensive against
April	Hsi-shan, Li Tsung-jen, and Pai Ch'ung-hsi (Kwangsi militarist), join Chiang Kai-shek's camp.	Chang Tso-lin.
June	Chang Tso-lin assassinated by Japanese army. Succeeded by son "Young Marshal" Chang Hsüeh-liang.	Capture of Peking (Peiping). End of Northern Expedition. Capital moved to Nanking.
Oct.		"National Government of China" proclaimed, however has effective jurisdiction over only Kiangsu, Chekiang, Fukien, Anhwei, and Kiangsi. Chiang Kai-shek becomes President.
Dec.	Chang Hsüeh-liang adheres to Nationalist camp.	

1929

Mar.-
April

Revolt of the Kwangsi militarists (Pai Ch'ung-hsi, Li Tsung-jen, Li Chi-shen, and Huang Shao-hung) against the Nanking government.

Oct.-

Nov.

War breaks out between Chiang Kai-shek and Feng Yü-hsiang.

1930

April-
May

Feng Yü-hsiang, Yen Hsi-shan, and Kwangsi generals (Shansi coalition) open hostilities with Nanking.

Sept.-

Oct.

Intervention of Chang Hsüeh-liang on side of Chiang Kai-shek. Defeat of Shansi coalition.

1931

May

Canton dissident government formed by Wang Ching-wei and Sun Fo.

Sept.

Japanese Kwangtung Army attacks Mukden.

Dec.

Chiang Kai-shek resigns from office. New National Government forms with Wang Ching-wei and Sun Fo.

Canton government dissolves.

1932

Trimvirate of Chiang Kai-shek, Wang Ching-wei, and Hu Han-min at Nanking.

APPENDIX D

CHINA'S PLACE AS AN IMPORTER IN THE WORLD TRADE
OF ARMAMENTS AND MUNITIONS OF WAR ¹

	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
Percentage share of total imports	1.8	1.5	3.0	12.3	3.4	8.9	13.5
Rank among the nations as an importer	20th	18th	13th	1st	12th	2nd	1st

Figures from *Statistical Year-Book of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition* (League of Nations, Geneva), which used figures of the Chinese Maritime Customs.

¹Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 122.

| APPENDIX E

SOURCE AND AMOUNT OF CHINA'S IMPORTS OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION¹

(Figures from Chinese Maritime Customs statistics. Value unit is 100,000 Haikuan Taels. For each year the three largest sources of supply are recorded.)

	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
Germany	1.8	1.7	6.9	38.1	12.6	35.8	32.0
Norway	-	-	-	12.7	-	20.7	48.6
Japan	5.4	1.0	3.7	-	3.6	5.6	-
Hongkong	2.9	3.0	1.9	-	-	-	-
Italy	-	-	-	10.1	-	-	-
French Indo-China	-	-	-	-	1.6	-	-
Poland	-	-	-	-	-	-	25.3
<u>Totals</u>	11.2	8.2	15.9	72.0	22.0	68.9	113.9

¹Causey, *German Policy Towards China*, 122.

APPENDIX F

SELECTED DATA ON GERMAN ADVISORY PERSONNEL IN CHINA FROM 1928 TO 1930,
 COMPILED FROM FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCES¹

<u>RANK OR TITLE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DATE INFORMATION</u> <u>RECEIVED</u>	
Captain (ret.)	Ritter	July, 1928	[Did not arrive in China]
<i>Ministerialrat</i>	Schubart	Oct., 1928	Town Planning
Professor	Keiper	Oct., 1928	Geology
Professor	Otte	Oct., 1928	Statistics
Professor	Zanthier	Oct., 1928	Housing
Professor	Stölzner	Oct., 1929	Communications
Major (ret.)	v. Wangenheim	Jan., 1929	Mil. Training Unit
Police Counsellor	v. Kreitner	Jan., 1929	?
Air Advisor	Fuchs	Jan., 1929	?
?	Metzener	Feb., 1929	Gas
Lieutenant (ret.)	Hummel	Mar., 1929	Military Training
<i>Generalmajor (a.D.)</i>	Gudowius	Mar., 1929	Military History
<i>Generalleutnant (a.D.)</i>	Lindemann	Mar., 1929	Political Economy
Lt. Colonel (ret.)	Kriebel	June, 1929	Head, Advisory Staff
<i>Generalmajor (a.D.)</i>	Wetzell	Feb., 1930	Head, Advisory Staff

¹The information regarding the duties of the advisors is generally incorrect, and the table is designed to illustrate the information available to the Wilhelmstrasse at the outset of the establishment of the advisory group.

APPENDIX G

ORGANIZATION OF THE ADVISORY STAFF, JANUARY 1930¹

Leader of the Advisory Staff: Kriebel

Adjutant: Moellenhof

A. Civilian

1. Active Civil Servants

Ministerialrat Schubart (Town Planning)
Regierungsrat Dr. von Zanthier (Political Economy)
 Professor Keiper (Mining)
 Police Major Wendt (Police)
 Police Captain Techel (Airfields)
 Police Captain Koerner (Air Police)

2. Private Individuals

Ober-Baurat Piegler* (Railroads)
 Engineer von Henning* (Chemistry - Powder)
 Dr. Anselte (Powder)
 Dr. Blume (Chemistry - Nitrogen)
 Dr. Metzener (Gas)
 Dr. Zimmermann (Hygiene)
 Dr. Fehrmann** (Medical)
 Dr. [de] Fremery*** (Arsenals)
 Professor Stölzner (Signals)
Dipl. Ing. Fuchs (Aircraft)
 Engineer Rubens (Aircraft Assembly)
 Boehler (Aircraft Assembly)

B. Military

1. Training Unit

Beelitz	von Hornhardt
Heise	Hummel
Meyer	Lehmann (Flight Instructor)
Neunzert	Welkoborsky (Flight Instructor)
Graf von Moltke	Koeppen
Frh. von Bock	Martin
Krummacher	Landauer
von Egidy	Weber
Simon Eberhardt	

¹PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär, III, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 266 (IV Chi 419), Anlage 4 (Consulate-General Shanghai, No. 15, Anlage 10, January 15, 1930), January 28, 1930.

2. War College

Fischer

Kotz

*Austrian
**Swiss
***Dutch

APPENDIX H

LIST OF ADVISORS WHO HAVE LEFT THE ADVISORY STAFF SINCE
ITS ESTABLISHMENT ON NOVEMBER 1, 1928¹

<u>Rank or Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Duties in China</u>
<u>A. Deceased</u>				
Colonel	Bauer [Max]	1927	1929	General Staff
Pyrotechnist	Landauer	1929	1930	Pyrotechnical
First Lieutenant	Hartung	1931	1932	Cavalry
<i>Generalmajor</i>	Link	1932	1933	Mil. Engineers
Captain	von Egidy	1929	1934	Mil. Engineers
(killed in Accidents)				
Officer Cadet	von Hornhardt	1929	1930	Infantry
First Lieutenant	Frh. von Bock	1929	1931	Infantry
 B. Of the advisors hired in 1928-1929 the following have left:				
Colonel	von Alten	1930	1930	Cavalry
<i>Dr. Ing.</i>	Anselt	1929	1930	Arsenals
Major	Beelitz	1929	1932	Cavalry (Light Art.)
Lt. Commander	Darmer*	1929	1930	Coastal Defense
Lt. Colonel	Fischer	1929	1931	Infantry
Major (Swiss)	Dr. Fehrmann	1929	1933	Medical
Colonel (Dutch)	de Fremery	1929	1935	Arsenals
<i>Dipl. Ing.</i>	Fuchs [Otfried]	1929	1931	Aviation
<i>Generalmajor</i>	Gudowius	1929	1935	General Staff
Captain	Heise	1929	1933	Artillery
<i>Kommerzialrat</i>	von Hennig	1929	1933	Arsenals
Professor	Keiper	1929	1932	Arsenals
Major	Kotz	1929	1934	Infantry
First Lieutenant	Koerner	1929	1931	Air Police
Commissariat				
Counsellor	Koeppen	1929	1932	Commissariat
Lt. Colonel	Kriebel	1929	1930	General Staff
Police Counsellor	Dr. von Kreitner	1929	1930	Police
First Lieutenant	Lehmann	1929	1933	Aviation
<i>Generalleutnant</i>	Lindemann**	1929	1932	Artillery
<i>Dr. Ing.</i>	Metzener	1929	1935	Gas

¹MA, W 02-44/9, List, n.d. [1938], 95.

<u>Rank or Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Duties in China</u>
First Lieutenant	Moellenhof	1929	1932	Military Engineers
First Lieutenant	Graf Moltke	1929	1930	Infantry
First Lieutenant	Neunzert	1929	1930	Infantry
<i>Ober-Baurat</i>	Piegl	1929	1931	Railroads
Engineer	Rubens	1929	1932	Aviation Engineer
<i>Ministerialrat</i>	Dr. Schubart	1929	1930	Construction
Captain	Simon-Eberhard	1929	1931	Artillery
First Lieutenant	Streppel	1930	1934	Infantry
Major	Frhr. von Wangenheim	1928	1935	General Staff
Lieutenant	Weber	1929	1934	Military Engineers
First Lieutenant	Welkoborski	1929	1932	Aviation
Major	Wendt	1930	1930	Police
First Lieutenant	Techel	1929	1930	Police
Dr. Phil.	von Zanthier	1929	1931	Economics
Dr. Med.	Zimmermann	1929	1932	Medical

Total: 42

* Employed after 1932 with Canton Provincial Government as advisor for coastal fortifications. *PA, Abt. IV, Po 13 Chi: Militär*, VI, Legation Peiping to AA, No. 165 (IV Chi 873), March 8, 1933.

** Employed after 1933 in Canton; later in North China.

APPENDIX I

LIST OF ADVISORS HIRED AFTER 1930 WHO LEFT ADVISORY STAFF

BY THE END OF 1935¹

<u>Rank or Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Branch of Service (China)</u>
Colonel	Bade	1931	1935	Infantry
Survey Photographer	Baumgärtner	1930	1933	Aerial Survey
Lt. Colonel	Baumann	1933	1933	Engineers
Captain	Brose	1932	1934	Infantry
First Lieutenant	von Busekist	1932	1934	Infantry
Pyrotechnist Lt.	Czerniewitz	1932	1934	Arsenals
Higher Engineer	Dulheuer	1932	1935	Arsenals
Staff Veterinarian	Dr. Eberbeck	1932	1934	Veterinarian
<i>Int. Obersekr.</i>	Erdniss	1933	1935	Commissariat
<i>Dipl. Ing.</i>	Ertner	1931	1932	Aerial Survey
Lt. Colonel	Dr. Guse	1930	1935	General Staff
Captain	Gilbert	1931	1934	Artillery
Lt. Colonel	Haubs	1930	1933	Signals
Colonel	Heins	1932	1935	General Staff
Higher Pyrotechnist	Hotz	1932	1935	Pyrotechnics
Pilot	Hartmann (Heinrich)	1930	1934	Aerial Survey
Major	Hartmann (Walter)	1932	1933	Artillery
Captain	Kaiser	1931	1933	Infantry
<i>Generalleutnant</i>	Karlewski	1933	1934	[33] Arsenals
Major	von Knobelsdorff	1930	1934	Intelligence
Major	Krug	1931	1933	Pioneer
Weapons-Master	Langer	1932	1934	Weaponry
Colonel (Vet.)	Dr. Leber	1932	1934	Veterinarian
First Lieutenant	Moritz	1931	1933	Infantry
Captain	Mueller	1933	1934	Infantry
<i>Ob.Reg. Rat</i>	Dr. Muck	1931	1932	Police
First Lieutenant	Ruef	1930	1935	Aerial Survey
Major	Schaumburg	1930	1932	Infantry
Weapons-Master	Schulz	1932	1934	Weaponry
Lt. Colonel	Schindler	1931	1932	Gendarmerie
First Lieutenant	Spiess	1930	1931	Aerial Survey
<i>Dipl. Ing.</i>	Wahlen	1931	1932	Aerial Survey
<i>Generalmajor</i>	Wetzell	1930	1934	General Staff

¹MA, W 02-44/9, List, n.d.[1938], 97.

APPENDIX J

STATUS OF THE MILITARY ADVISORY STAFF ON APRIL 1, 1936¹

<u>Name</u>	<u>Service Rank</u>	<u>Arrival in China</u>
Arnade [Kurt]	Captain (ret.)	1936
Bauer [Otto]	First Lieutenant (ret.)	1930
Baumbach [Wilhelm]	Major (ret.)	1933
Bautz	Weapons-Master (ret.)	1932
Bernhardt	Master of Metal-Work (ret.)	1932
Dr. Blume	Lieutenant (ret.)	1929
von Boddien	Captain (<i>Rittmeister</i>) (ret.)	1931
Boegel [Gustav]	First Lieutenant (ret.)	1932
Boehler	<i>Werkmeister, ehem. fllr</i>	1929-1934 (1st)
	<i>Flugzeug</i>	1935 (2nd)
Balk	<i>Dipl. Ing.</i>	1932
Borchart	Lieutenant (ret.)	1935
Braun	First Lieutenant (ret.)	1934
Bruendel [Karl]	Major (ret.)	1933
von der Damerau	Captain (ret.)	1931
Fabiunke	Major (active list)	1935
Glitz	Captain (ret.)	1934
Dr. Haase	General Staff Vet. (ret.)	1935
Heinrich	Higher Pyrotechnist (ret.)	1934
Heinrichs [Konrad]	Major (ret.)	1934
Held	<i>Generalleutnant</i>	1934
Herrmann	Captain (<i>Rittmeister</i>) (ret.)	1934
Hummel	Lieutenant (ret.)	1928
Krummacher [Friedrich Adolf]	Captain (<i>sic</i> , Major) (ret.)	1929
Kubik	<i>Werkmeister (a.D.)</i>	1932
Lassen	Colonel (ret.)	1929
von Lamezan	Major (ret.)	1932
Lindemann [Walther]	Major (ret.)	1934
Lorenz	Captain (<i>Rittmeister</i>) (ret.)	1931
Lohmann	Lt., <i>Dipl. Ing.</i> , Economics	1933
Martin	Weapons-Master	1929
Meyer [Konstantin]	Captain (ret.)	1929
Neidholdt	Lt. Colonel	1935
Neumaier	<i>Dipl. Ing.</i>	1932
Newiger [Albért]	Lt. Colonel (ret.)	1935
Nolte [Hans Erich]	Colonel (ret.)	1931
Oehme	Captain (ret.)	1933
Pirner [Hans]	Major (ret.)	1931
Pohle	<i>Unteroffizier (a.D.)</i>	1931
Rave	Lt. Commander (ret.)	1931
Schimmelfennig	Major (ret.)	1932

¹MA, W 02-44/9, List, n.d.[1938], 171-73.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Service Rank</u>	<u>Arrival in China</u>
Senczek [Erich]	<i>Regierungsobersinspektor i.R.</i>	1934
von Schmeling [-Deringhofen]	Lieutenant (ret.)	1934
Speman	<i>Generalleutnant (a.D.)</i>	1931
Starke [Hermann]	<i>Generalmajor (a.D.)</i>	1933
von Stein	Captain (ret.)	1931
Stennes [Walter]	Police Captain (ret.)	1933
Streccius [Alfred]	<i>Generalleutnant (a.D.)</i>	1934
Stölzner	Lieutenant (ret.)	1928
Vetter	Colonel (ret.)	1933
Voigt-Ruscheweyh [Hermann]	Lt. Colonel (ret.)	1933
Wilck [Hermann]	Colonel (ret.)	1932

Total: 51

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<i>China 1</i>	<i>Allgemeine Angelegenheiten</i>	118	7.17-3.20
<i>China 7</i>	<i>Das Verhältnis Chinas zu Deutschland</i>	7-15	4.17-7.22
<i>China 22</i>	<i>Kiautschou und die deutschen Interessen in Shantung</i>	31-32	10.15-5.22

2. Files of *Weltkrieg*

<i>WK Nr. 13</i>	<i>Rückwirkung auf Ostasien und die Kolonien</i>	20-32	1.17-12-19
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3. Files of *Deutsche Friedensdelegation in Versailles*

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<i>Pol 8t</i>	<i>China</i>	1	6.19
<i>Pol 8y</i>	<i>Schantung</i>	1	5.19-6.19

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<i>17</i>	<i>Die Konferenz in Washington</i>	1	10.21-4.25
<i>37</i>	<i>China</i>	1-5	10.20-6.35

RM 8	Beziehungen zu ausländischen Staaten	1-10	6.20-12.35
RM 11	Waffenablieferung sowie Herstellung u. Verkauf von Waffen	-	7.20-11.33
5. Files of Büro des Staatssekretärs			
Ochi	Angelegenheiten des Fernen Ostens	1	8.25-3.27
Ochi	China	2	3.27-4.27
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OA	Ostasien	4	12.27-4.29
Ochiru	Russisch-chinesischer Konflikt wegen der mandschurischen Ostbahn	1-5	7.29-2.30
6. Files of Abteilung II F - Luft			
Ostasien	Luftverkehr: Ostasien	1-6	9.20-12.36
7. Files of Abteilung II F-M (Militär und Marine)			
A3	Abrüstungskonferenz in Washington	1	7.21-7.25
K41	Verkauf von Kriegsmaterial nach Asien	1	5.26-12.34
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Ostasien Kolonien K2	Ehemals deutsche Kolonien	1-2	12.19-4.36
Russland Handakten	Russland-China	44	1.26-11-28
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9. Files of *Politische Abteilung IV*

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Po 4 OA	Zwischenstaat. aussenpol. Probleme	1	7.33-8.33
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Po 4 OA	Die Konferenz in Washington Üb. d. Beschränk. d. Rüstungen und Fragen des fernen Ostens	1-5	6.21-1.36
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Po 4 OA	Sicherheitspakt	1	1925
Po 6 OA	Nationalitätenfrage, Fremdvölker, Minorität	1-2	6.21-11.36
Po 11 Nr. 3 OA	Personalien: Staatsmänner	-	10.29-8.35
Po 11 Nr. 4 OA	Personalien: Militärs	1	1926
Po 12 OA	Pressewesen	1-3	9.20-12.35
Po 12 OA	Akten von Erich von Salzmann	-	6.21-5.29
Po 13 OA	Militärangelegenheiten: Generalia	-	5.23-10.35
Po 14 OA	Marineangelegenheiten	1	1.26-5.35
Po 15 OA	Agenten - und Spionagewesen	1	7.31-4.35
Po 16 OA	Religions - und Kirchenwesen	1	1926-1930
Po 17 OA	Unterrichtswesen	-	1921-1932
Po 25 OA	Deutschtum im Ausland	-	4.21-6.35
Po 1 Chi	Allgemeine auswärtige Politik	1-14	12.20-1.36

<i>Po 2 Chi</i>	<i>Politische Beziehungen Chinas zu Deutschland</i>	1-7	12.20-1.36
<i>Po 2 A Chi</i>	<i>Vertrag über die Wiederherstellung des Friedenszustandes</i>	1-8	3.20-1.26
<i>Po 3 Chi</i>	<i>Politische Beziehungen China</i>		
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	- <i>Belgien</i>	1-3	4.20-3.31
	- <i>Bolivien</i>	1	1920
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	- <i>Dänemark</i>	-	1928-1929
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	- <i>Tschechoslowakei</i>	1	1921-1930
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<i>Po 3 adh. Chi</i>	<i>Waffenlieferungen aus Anlass des Chin.-Jap. Konfliktes 1931-1932</i>	1-2	11.31-10.34
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<i>Po 5 A Chi</i>	<i>Südchines. Republik: Sitz Canton</i>	1-7	3.21-10.31
<i>Po 8 Nr. 1 Chi</i>	<i>Wahrnehmung Chin. Interessen in Auslande</i>	1-5	7.29-4.33
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<i>Po 9 Chi</i>	<i>Diplomatische u. Konsularische Vertretungen Chinas in Deutschland</i>	1-2	3.20-3.36
<i>Po 10 Chi</i>	<i>Deutsche diplomatische u. konsularische Vertretungen in China</i>	1-8	3.20-4.36
<i>Po 11 Chi</i>	<i>Personalien</i>	-	-
<i>Po 11 Nr. 3 Chi</i>	<i>Staatsmänner</i>	1-4	4.20-4.36
<i>Po 11 Nr. 4 Chi</i>	<i>Personalien - Militärs</i>	1	6.20-4.35
<i>Po 11 Nr. 5 Chi</i>	<i>Personalien - Journalisten</i>	-	1.21-10.33
<i>Po 11 Nr. 6 Chi</i>	<i>Personalien - Andere</i>	1-2	1.19-8.35
<i>Po 12 Chi</i>	<i>Pressewesen</i>	1-7	5.20-5.36
<i>Po 13 Chi</i>	<i>Militärangelegenheiten</i>	1-9	5.20-6.35
<i>Po 14 Chi</i>	<i>Marineangelegenheiten</i>	1-2	7.20-4.36
<i>Po 15 Chi</i>	<i>Agenten- und Spionagewesen</i>	-	2.21-5.36
<i>Po 16 Chi</i>	<i>Religions- und Kirchenwesen</i>	1-6	3.20-4.36
<i>Po 17 Chi</i>	<i>Unterrichtswesen</i>	1-8	12.19-4.36
<i>Po 19 Chi</i>	<i>Sozialismus, Bolschewismus, Kommunismus, usw.</i>	1-5	5.20-5.36
<i>Po 23 A Chi</i>	<i>Bürgerkrieg in China</i>	1-6	8.24-11.33
<i>Po 25 Chi</i>	<i>Das Deutschtum in China</i>	1-5	10.20-6.36
<i>Po 26 Chi</i>	<i>Politische und kulturelle Propaganda</i>	1-2	1.22-1.36
<i>Kol-Po 1 Chi</i>	<i>Kolonialpolitik im allgemeinen</i>	-	1921-1928
<i>Kol-Po 2 Chi</i>	<i>Das Schutzgebiet Kiautschau</i>	1-3	7.21-8.32
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10. Files of Politische Abteilung VIII

Po 2 Chi	Politische Beziehungen Chinas zu Deutschland	1-2	7.36-6.39
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CHINA

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Waffen A	Kriegsmaterial China	1-2	4.23-11.28
Waffen B	Beiband Anzeigen	1-2	12.27-10.29
Verkehrswesen 10	Empfehlungen und Zulassungen zu Behörden, Staats- und Privatbetrieben	1-4	8.20-5.36
Verkehrswesen 12	Reiseberichte	1-2	10.24-12.35
Wirtschaft 1	Allgemeine wirtschaftliche Lage	1-6	4.20-4.36
Wirtschaft 1A	[Wiederaufbau der chin. Wirtschaft nach den inneren Wirren] Beteiligung Deutschlands	1-5	6.28-9.35

<i>Wirtschaft 1 Nr. 1</i>	<i>Periodische wirtschaftliche Berichte</i>	1	2.21-12.24
<i>Wirtschaft 6</i>	<i>Wirtschaftliche Beziehungen zu Deutschland</i>	1-2	3.21-12.33
<i>Wirtschaft 13</i>	<i>Beteiligung deutschen und fremden Kapitals in China</i>	1-2	5.20-1.36
12. Files of Unterstaatssekretär für Wirtschaft			
<i>W 186 I</i>	<i>China: wirtschaftl. Lage</i>	I	12.20
<i>W 186 II</i>	<i>- wirtschaftl. Ereignisse</i>	II	7.20-10.20
13. Files of Sonderreferat Wirtschaft			
<i>Wirtschaft II</i>	<i>China</i>	1	3.32-10.32
<i>Wirtschaft III</i>	<i>China</i>	1	9.20-7.21
14. Files of Weltkrieg: Länderabteilungen 1920-1936			
<i>Ostasien W-K</i>	<i>Weltkrieg</i>	1	3.20-4.35
15. Files of Abteilung Friedensvertrag			
<i>IVb FV4 China</i>	<i>Ausführung der FV, Deutsche Rechte und Interessen in China</i>	1	3.20-9.20
<i>IVb FV 10-3 China</i>	<i>Ausgleichsverfahren - China</i>	1	6.20-8.22
16. Files of Schuldreferat			
-	<i>Die Kriegsschuldfrage, Stellung des Auslands - China</i>	-	1.31-2.34

17. Files of *Referat Völkerbund*

<i>China</i>	<i>China</i>	1-3	3.20-3.36
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18. *Direktoren-Handakten (1920-1936)*Hauschildt

<i>D</i>	<i>Ferner Osten</i>	-	9.21-2.23
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Wallroth

-	<i>China, Japan, Siam</i>	31	3.24-6.27
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Trautmann

-	<i>China Verträge</i>	-	6.24-6.29
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-	<i>China</i>	-	5.32-7.33
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-	<i>Ost-Asien, Mandschurei</i>	-	10.31-5.32
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19. *Handakten*

<i>Ha Pol.</i>	<u>K. Ritter (Ha Pol)</u>		
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<i>Min. Dir.</i>			
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<i>Ritter</i>	<i>China</i>	1	6.22-1.29
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20. Files of *Delegationen, Bevollmächtigte, Kommissionen*

<i>8h</i>	<i>Ostasien</i>	1	4.19-5.19
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-	<i>Handakten Ostasien</i> <i>(Kiautschau)</i>	-	5.19
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21. Files of *Handelpolitische Abteilung*Handakten Clodius

-	<i>China</i>	2	12.29-2.39
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Handakten (Nachtrag)

<i>Ges.</i>	<i>China</i>	1	4.21-11.29
<i>Eisenlohr</i>			

B. Bundesarchiv, Koblenz

1. Bestand R 2 (Reichsfinanzministerium)

<u>No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Dates</u>
735-739	<i>Schaden gegen Deutsche in China</i>	1920-1935
837-838	<i>Verhandlungen mit dem Ostasiatischen-verein über Regelung der Privatforderungen an China</i>	1924-1931
988-990	<i>Liquidierung deutschen Eigentums innerhalb der englischen Interessensphäre in China</i>	1920-1930
991	<i>Liquidierung deutschen Eigentums in China durch Frankreich</i>	1921-1924

Schuldwesen des Auslands

1912	<i>China - Int. Verträge und Allg. Rechtsang.</i>	1922-1929
24580	<i>China</i>	1925-1931
2956	<i>Ausführung des Friedensvertrags hinsichtlich auf China</i>	1921-1925

Kriegslasten

10.181	<i>Handelsbeziehungen D. mit China</i>	1929-1932
9895	<i>China: Zollrecht, allg. wirtschaftl. Lage</i>	-
9971	<i>China: Zoll & Steuerverhältnis</i>	-
13087	<i>Finanz, Bank- und Börsenwesen: China</i>	-

AA Auslandswesen

11572	<i>AA 2 Auslandsvertretungen, Allgemeines, China</i>	-
14937	<i>Deutsch-Asiatische - und Deutsch-Orient Bank</i>	1930-1933

Exportkredite

16675 *Steffen & Heymann "Projekte Nanking"*

Vermischte Exportkredite der

17564 *Steffen & Heymann, Berlin*

2. *Bestand R 7 (Reichswirtschaftsministerium)*VI RWM/ARCHIV RWM

40-47 *China - Handelsverbindung mit
 einzelnen Ländern [Each No.
 represents two volumes]* 1924-1945

3. *Bestand R 43 I: Alte Reichskanzlei*

<u>No.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Contents</u>
56	<i>Auswärtige Angelegenheiten</i>	1919-1931	<i>China</i>
57	"	1931-1935	<i>China</i>
1083	<i>Handel</i>	1928-1933	<i>Handelsverträge mit Asien</i>
1089	<i>Handel</i>	1928-1933	<i>Handelsverträge mit China</i>
2689	<i>Polizei 9</i>	1920-1933	<i>Waffen und Munitions- herstellung, Handel</i>
	<i>Kabinettsprotokolle</i>	1919-1933	

3. *Bestand R 85 Auswärtiges Amt, Abteilung II (Handelpolitisches Abt.)*

979 II	<i>Frieden II, Wirtschaftliches Asien, Nr. 1</i>	4.18-5.19
998 II	<i>Frieden II, Wirtschaftliches China, Nr. 1</i>	1.18-5.19

5. Bestand R 85 Auswärtiges Amt, Abteilung III (Rechtsabteilung)

i. Neutralität 77

6692-6693

Die Haltung der Neutralen im
Europäischen Krieg 1914: China

1914-1919

6. Bestand R 57 Deutsches Auslandsinstitut II

DAI 635

Ostasiatische Ausstellung

1921

7. Bestand NSDAP HAUPTARCHIV

i. XVI - Deutschland im Ausland

Folder 666

China

8. Bestand NS 10: Persönliche Adjutantur des Führer und Reichskanzler

i. B. Sachakten

I. Aussenpolitische Angelegenheiten

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Bd. 2 Si-Sz hierin: "Aus Shanghai Abschied
von Generalkonsul Kriebel"
[1937]

9. Nachlässe

Nachlass Max Bauer

Nrs. 16, 39, 40, 41, 42, 42a, 42b,
43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49,
50, 50a, 51, 55, 58, 60, 62,
65, 69a, 70, 70a, 72, 72a.

Nachlass Wilhelm Solf

Nrs. 77, 88, 122, 158.

Nachlass Wolfgang Jaenicke

Nrs. 27, 28, 55, 56, 57, 58, 58a, 59,
59a, 60, 61, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86,
87, 88.

Nachlass Ritter von Epp

Nr. 13.

C. *Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv, Freiburg i. Br.*1. *Verschiedenes*

II M 62/6	<i>Reichswehrmin. Marineltg., Verschiedenes (Juli 1929 März 1931)</i>	
5892	<i>Marinearchiv F VII c. 7 VI, Waffenhandel nach China</i>	8.3.27-4.3.29
W 02 44/1- W 02 44/12	<i>Deutsche Beraterschaft China</i>	

2. *Nachlässe*

<i>Nachlass Kurt von Schleicher</i>	<i>Nr. N 42/35</i>
<i>Nachlass Hans von Seeckt</i>	<i>Nrs. 27, 35, 47, 48, 50, 64, 67, 77, 88, 203, 204, 205, 290.</i>
<i>Nachlass Hermann Starke</i>	<i>Nr. N 218/1</i>

D. *U.S. National Archives Microfilm Publications Microcopy T-120*

Roll 5106	Serial L797	<i>Politische Beziehungen zwischen China und Russland</i>	11.6.1929- 31.12.29
Roll 179	Serial 210	<i>Büro Unterstaatssekretär:</i>	10.37-1.38
		<i>Neunmächtekonferenz</i>	
Roll 5620	Serial L1525	<i>Tages u. Wochenberichte der Abt. IV Chi</i>	1.1.29-24.10.31

E. *U.S. National Archives Microfilm Publications Microcopy T-179
(German Records Microfilmed at Alexandria, Va.)*

Rolls 1-47	<i>Tsingtao Consulate</i>
Rolls 48-61	<i>Chefoo and Hankow Consulates</i>

F. *Nachlass Gustav Stresemann, U.S. National Archives Microfilm
Publications Microcopy T-120*

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